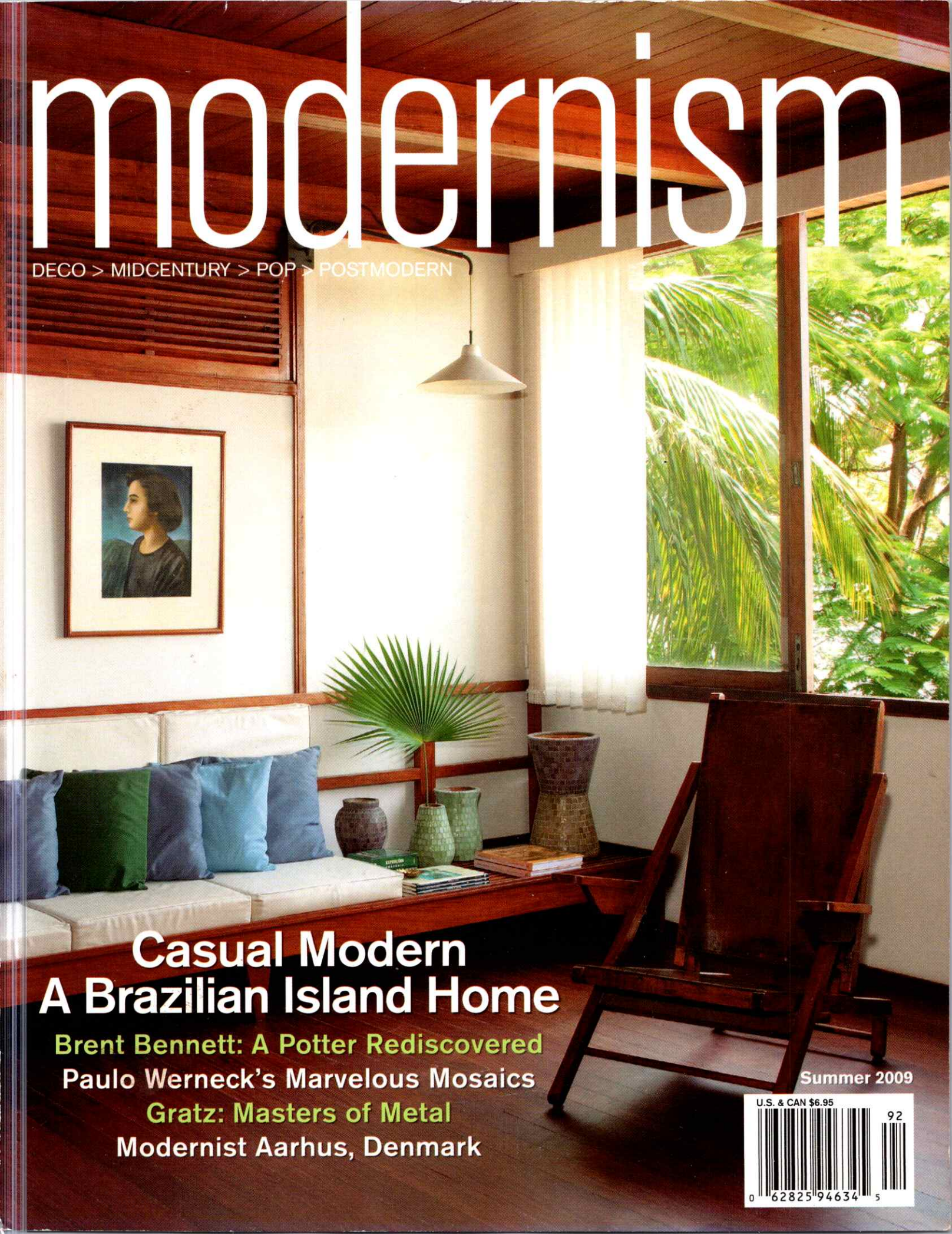


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Casual Modern A Brazilian Island Home

Brent Bennett: A Potter Rediscovered

Paulo Werneck's Marvelous Mosaics

Gratz: Masters of Metal

Modernist Aarhus, Denmark

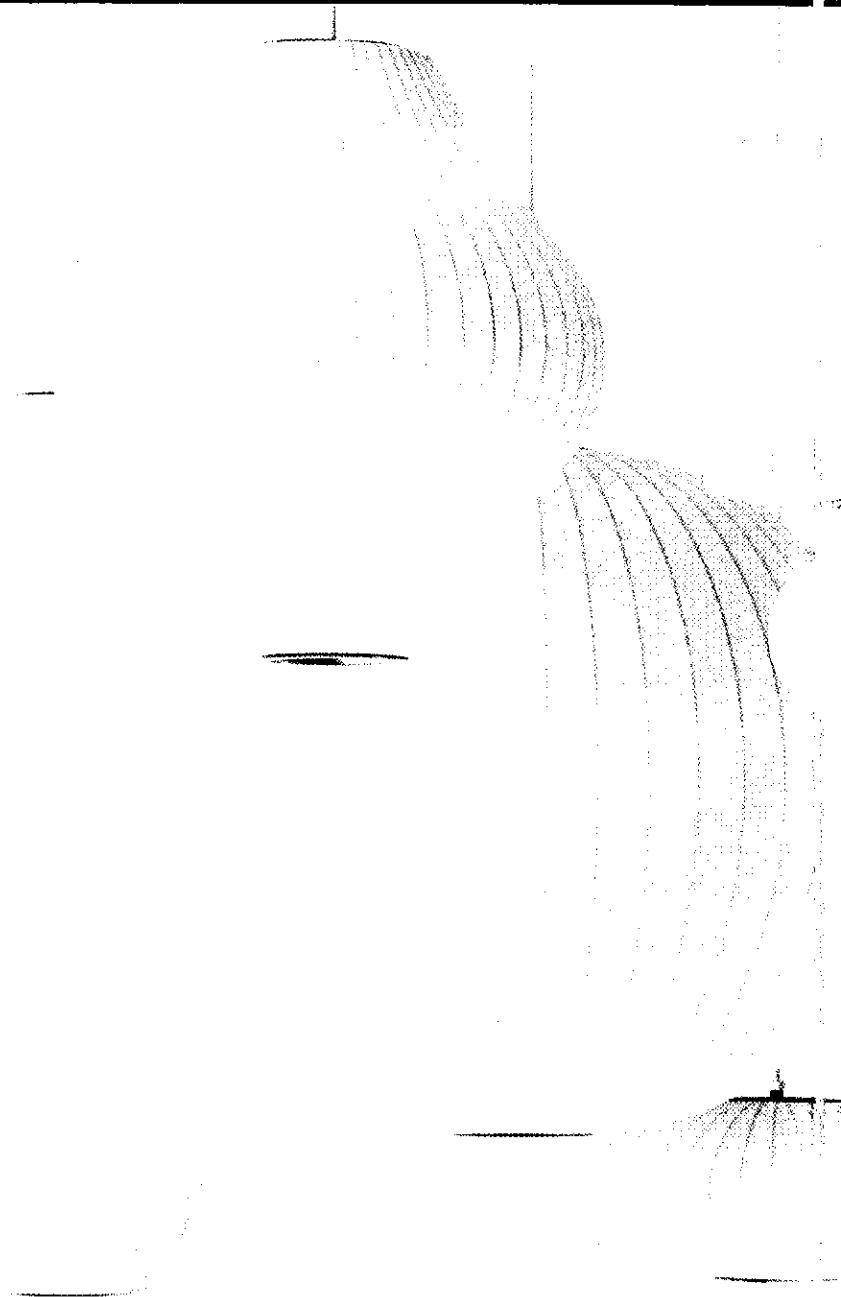
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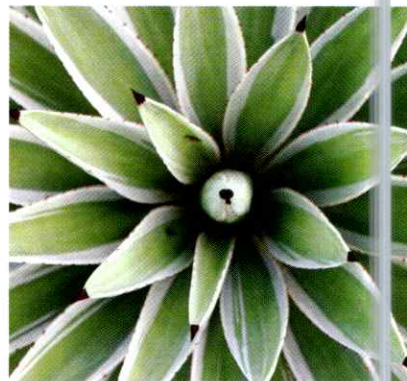
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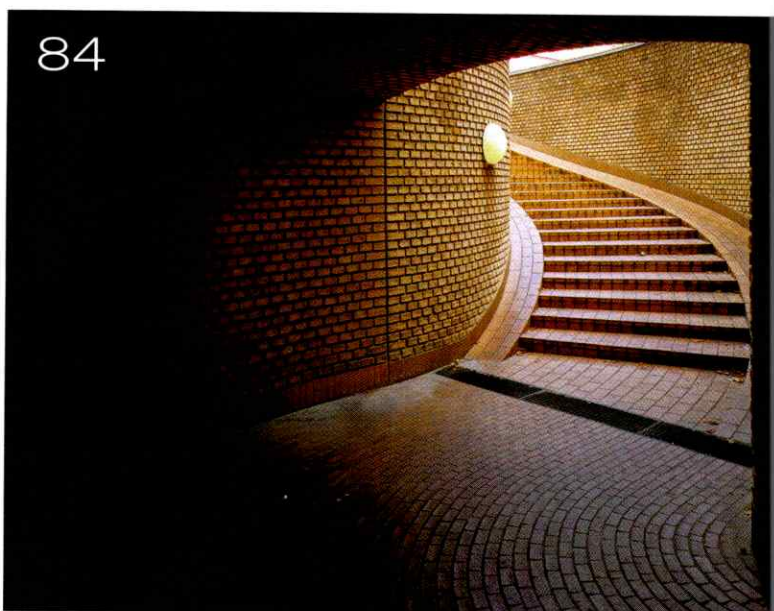
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By Sandy McLendon





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Tel: 609/397-4104 • Fax: 609/397-4409
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URL: www.modernismmagazine.com

Subscriptions to Modernism are available for \$19.95 per year, \$34.95 for two years. Canadian subscriptions, add \$5 per year; other foreign subscriptions, add \$10 per year. Issues are published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

All material is compiled from sources believed to be reliable but published without responsibility for omissions or errors.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modernism, 199 George Street, Lambertville, NJ 08530.

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Printed in the USA.

Periodicals rate postage paid at Lambertville, NJ, and additional mailing offices.

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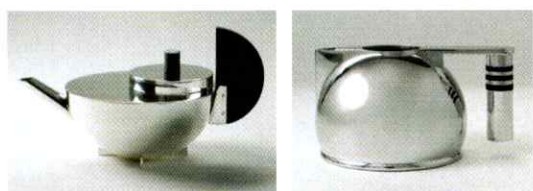
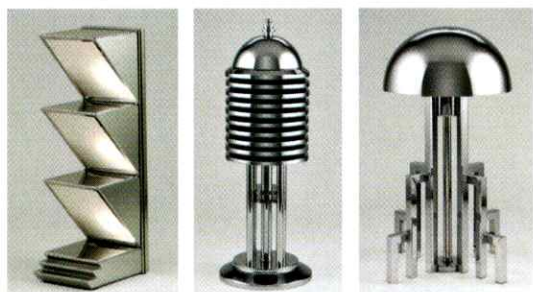
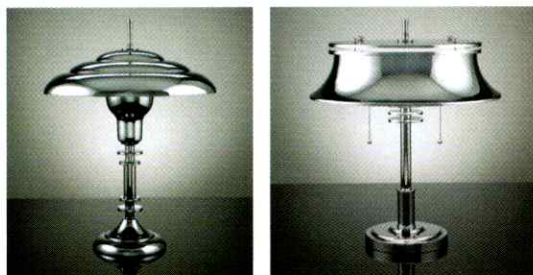
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EDITOR'S WORD



It can seem astonishing, in retrospect, that a now-revered designer or artist was once forgotten, resurrected one day by a chance discovery or the efforts of a friend or family member. The work may even have been hiding in plain sight, seen, but unappreciated. In this issue, we bring you some of these amazing designers,

artisans and historic projects.

Brazilian mosaic artist Paulo Werneck is virtually unknown even in his own country, despite the fact that thousands of people pass daily by his murals — crafted from 1942 to 1980 — in cities across Brazil as they head to work, the local bank or a government office. Werneck's boundless creativity — and that of his family — is also apparent at his daughter's home, designed by famed modernist architect Marcelo Roberto, on an island near Rio de Janeiro. Werneck created not only the house's centerpiece — a bold blue-and-white abstract mosaic mural — but also the built-in furniture, stained glass and other elements, which are complemented by his daughter Regina Werneck's silkscreened tiles and family portraits and his grandson Gaspar Saldanha's boldly patterned fabrics.

Here at home, hiding behind artfully graffitied concrete block walls in Queens, New York, is Gratz Industries, a small metal fabricator. Many modernist classics owe their birth to its artistry and dedication to the artists and designers, like Mies van der Rohe, Raymond Loewy and Isamu Noguchi, who have sought it out since the 1930s for the development of furniture prototypes or the crafting of sculptures.

Forgotten Southern California potter Brent Bennett came out of retirement after his daughter discovered one of his creations at a gallery under another artist's name. She set the record straight, sparking a chain of events that led to a successful exhibition of her father's work and the inauguration of a second chapter in his artistic career.

And all across the United States, hundreds of post offices, city halls and government offices shelter murals painted by artists, both celebrated and obscure, under the auspices of enlightened New Deal programs geared to reinvigorating the beleaguered 1930s economy. These artworks, along with laudably designed infrastructure like parkways and bridges, are seen by thousands of people every day who have no notion of the names of the hundreds of artists, architects and engineers who created them. Drawing renewed attention to these efforts reminds us of the value of the arts in everyday life.

We are also excited to introduce you to our new blogs, the latest step in our ongoing project to connect our readers to one another and bring you useful and thought-provoking information in a convenient format. Shades of Modern, by color consultant Bill Baccini, answers your questions about using color effectively in your home. Lime Design, by green design consultant Tracy Mitchell, offers ideas for making your home environmentally sustainable and directs you to the best products and methods. Check them out from our home page at www.modernismmagazine.com under Social Network.

A special thanks to Artnet, a web portal for collectors, for sponsoring our online edition. Artnet provides access to online auctions and information on market trends in the fine and decorative arts and offers news, reviews and features on the world's art and design markets in its online magazine (www.artnet.com).

—Andrea Truppin

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Jean Prouvé

Fauteuil léger n°356, a.k.a. "chaise Antony", 1954

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MAILBOX

First of all, I love your magazine. I was introduced to it by a friend a couple of years ago and I have been a subscriber ever since. In your Spring issue I read "Real Modern: Counter Trend," by Sandy McLendon, and I couldn't help but



Above The kitchen of Chiara Romano van Erp's childhood home in Torino, Italy, designed by her father, Augusto Romano, in 1949.

think about the kitchen I grew up with in the '50s, not quite with a *Skylark* countertop, but a cheerful solid cherry red Formica. It was designed in 1949 by my late father, Augusto Romano, an architect from Torino, Italy, who designed the house and the interior furniture. The house is still there and the kitchen is in use as it was 50 years ago, with some new appliances and minor changes. The most amazing thing is that the counter is still the same. It shows some minor wear here and there but it's still fine with its

original flip top table at the end. I always thought it could be a good advertisement for Formica! Thank you for your good work and best wishes for a long life for the magazine.

– Chiara Romano van Erp, ASID, Providence, RI

We love discovering great designers through our readers. Look for an article on Augusto Romano in an upcoming issue.

Please return the museum listings to the paper edition. It is one of the sections I find most valuable. I look at this section when the magazine first comes and throughout the remaining months till the next one comes in case I've forgotten about anything. I don't know of another source for these listings. You've always done a great job of compiling anything I'd be interested in.

– Carol Reed, Carlisle, PA

Thanks to all our readers who provide this type of valuable feedback. Due to reader requests like Carol's, we have returned the museum listings to the print edition.

Your online edition is excellent. I am a new person to *Modernism*, but I feel it gave me a great introduction.

– Hugh Vellos, via email

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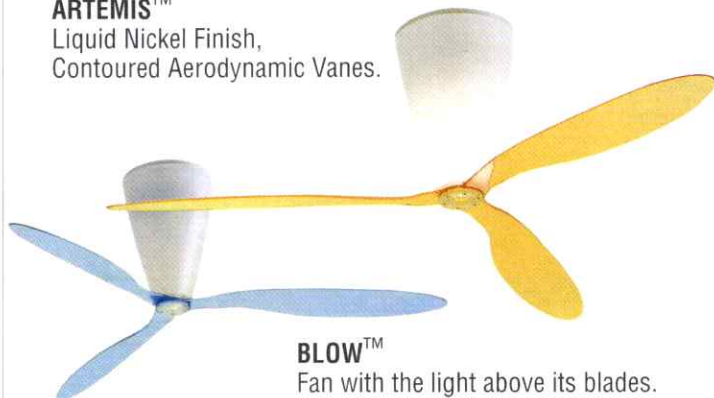
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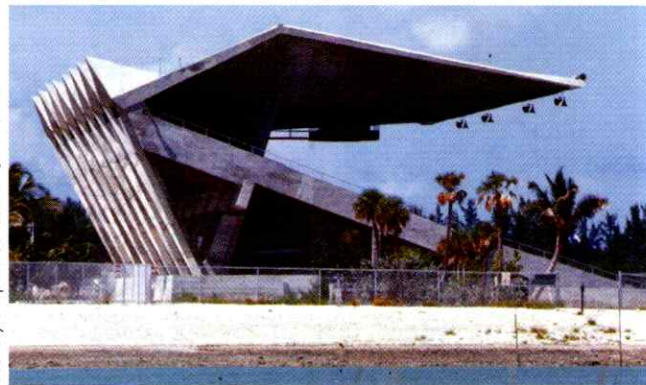
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Modern Times+

Read about places to see 20th-century design; the National Trust's 11 most endangered historic sites; a court ruling that may complicate preservation efforts across the country; a tongue-in-cheek take on classic modernist furniture; the World War II-era British poster kept under wraps, until now; and more...

City Report+

Shopping, dining, hotels and more in Aarhus and Copenhagen, Denmark.



Courtesy of Spillis Candela DMJM Archives.

Above Miami Marine Stadium in Miami, FL is one of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2009 11 Most Endangered Places in America.

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Whether you need advice on how to go green in your urban apartment or where to find environmentally friendly products, Tracy Mitchell has the answers.

Shades of Modern

Answers to Your Color Questions

Bill Baccini helps you pick the perfect colors for your modernist space and solves your crises!

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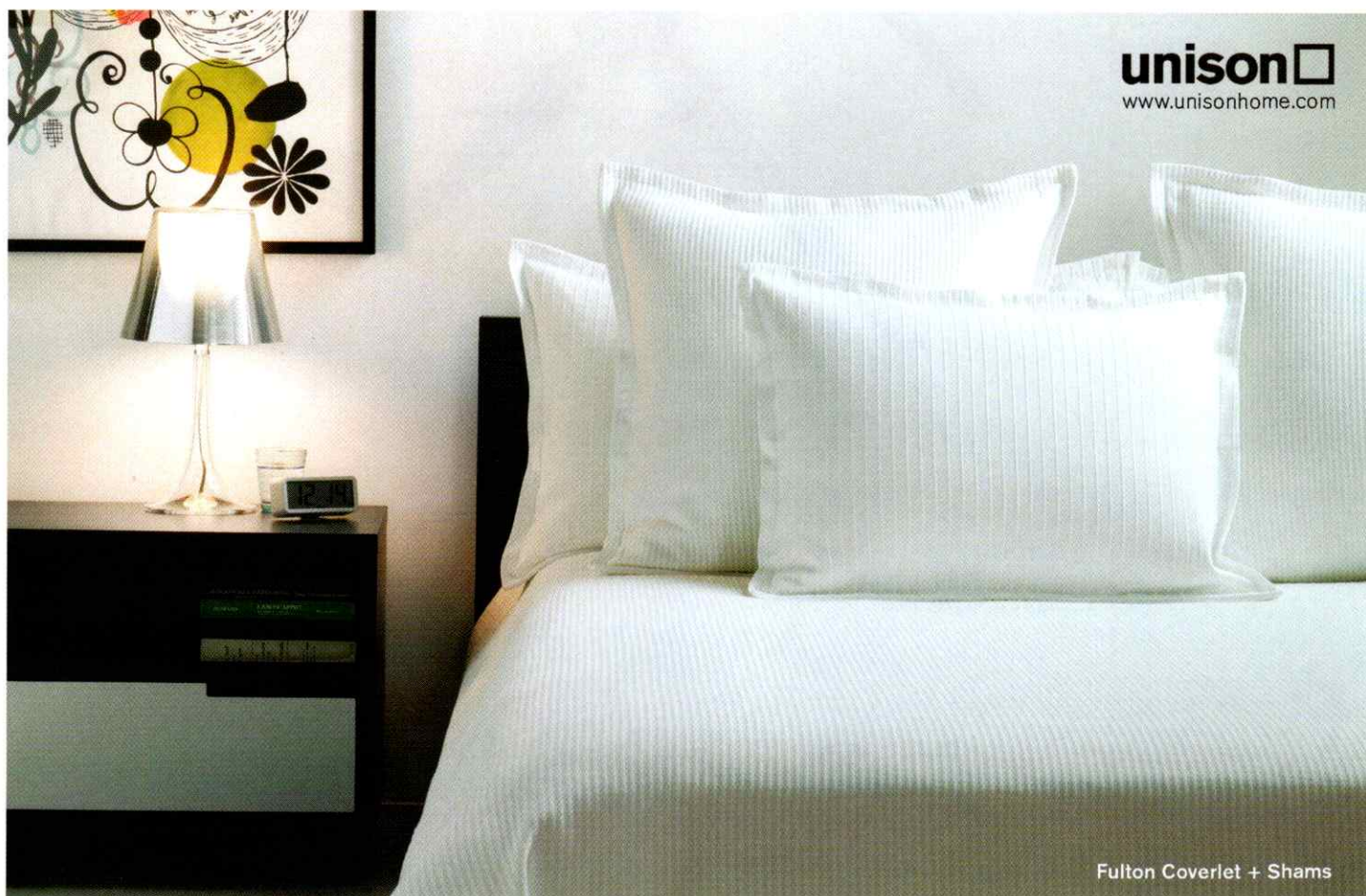
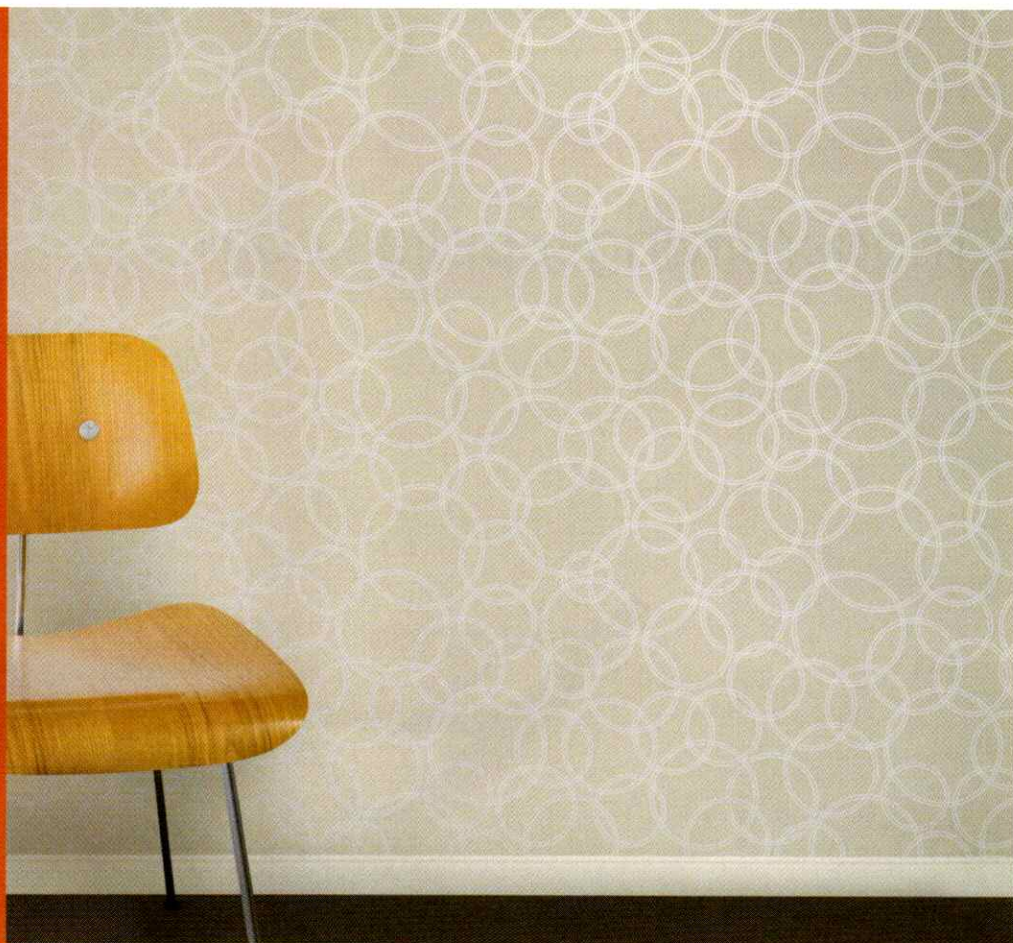
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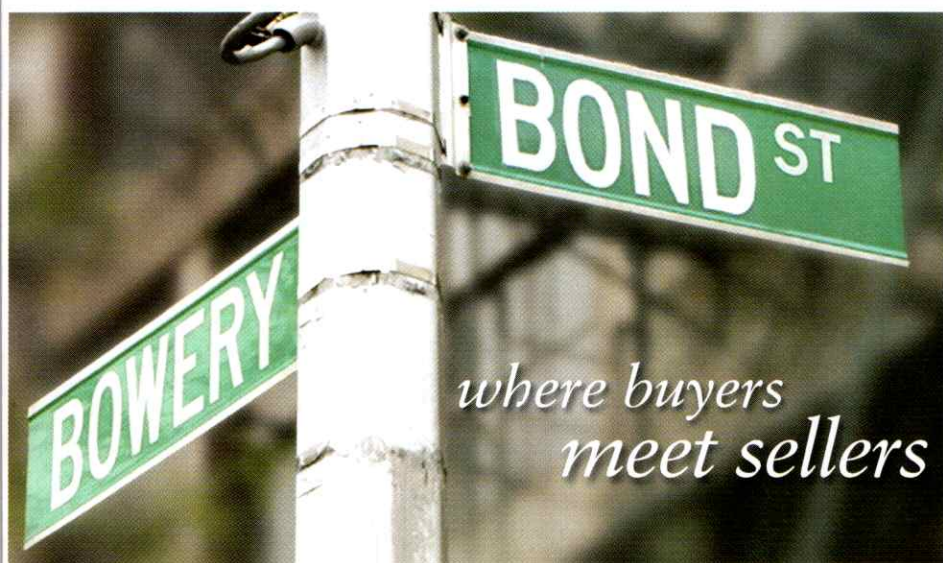
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EAST

Stage Pictures: Drawing for Performance
Through August 24

In Situ: Architecture and Landscape
Through January 18, 2010

What was Good Design? MoMA's Message 1944-56
Through November 30

Polish Posters 1945-89
Through November 30

Ron Arad

August 2 – October 19

Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
212/708-9400, www.moma.org

Set and costume studies spanning a century of modernist design for theatrical productions, including those of the Bauhaus and the Ballets Russes.

An examination of the relationship between landscaping and architecture of the past 100 years, drawing on materials in the museum's collections.

MoMA's conception of "Good Design" at midcentury, through 100 objects from the museum's collection, including furniture, textiles, household and sporting goods and graphics.

Posters as a subversive art form in Poland during the Communist era.

Known for his biomorphic furniture and sculpture, contemporary designer Ron Arad has his first major retrospective in the United States.

Frank Lloyd Wright: From Within Outward

Through August 23

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY
212/423-3500, www.guggenheim.org

In celebration of the Guggenheim's 50th anniversary, the museum examines its designer's thinking about architectural space through a variety of media, including more than 200 original Wright drawings. The related exhibition, "Learning by Doing," focuses on designs from the Taliesin Shelter program. For more information on the Guggenheim's 50th anniversary programs and events, visit www.guggenheim.org/50.

Below Emiko Oki, *Trophy* tableware, 2000, earthenware. At the Museum of Arts and Design.



Takashi Komori.

Photo: Jay Zukerkorn.



Above and opposite Abbott Miller, *Chair*. FSC-certified plywood from Bolivia, three chairs per sheet; shipped flat, dry-assembled with rubber mallet. At the Cooper-Hewitt.

Design for a Living World

Through January 4, 2010

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, New York, NY
212/849-8400, www.cooperhewitt.org

Ten leading designers, including Kate Spade, Yves Behar and Maya Lin, have been commissioned to develop new uses for sustainably grown and harvested resources from places like Bolivia, Micronesia and Maine.

Object Factory: The Art of Industrial Ceramics

Through September 13

Klaus Moje

Through September 20

Museum of Arts and Design, New York, NY
212/299-7777, www.madmuseum.org

More than 200 objects from 18 countries, from dinnerware to digital electronics.

A 30-year retrospective of Australian artist Moje's studio glass, including carved, layered and fused works.

Skyscrapers: Prints, Drawings, and Photographs of the Early Twentieth Century

Through November 1

Marcel Duchamp: Étant donné

August 15 – November 1

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA
215/763-8100, www.philamuseum.org

More than 50 prints, drawings and photographs from the museum's collections trace the development of the skyscraper between 1905 and 1940.

Called by Jasper Johns "the strangest work of art in any museum," Duchamp's final assemblage is displayed with all 80 works of art related to it, including studies and photographs.



Mary McFadden: Goddesses

Through August 30
National Museum of Women in the Arts,
Washington, DC
202/783-1500, www.nmwa.org

A presentation of more than 40 of the American couturier's 20th-century designs, along with an exploration of their inspiration in historic and ethnic clothing.

Dan Graham: Beyond

June 25 – October 11
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY
212/570-1360, www.whitney.org

The first survey of the artist's multidimensional career, featuring films, drawings, sculptures and architectural projects.

Creating the Modern Stage: Designs for Theater and Opera

Through August 16
Morgan Library and Museum, New York, NY
212/685-0008, www.themorgan.org

Twentieth-century stage designs for drama, vaudeville and opera productions, drawn primarily from the collection of scenic designer Donald Oenslager (1902–75).

A New and Native Beauty: The Art and Craft of Greene and Greene

July 14 – October 18
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Boston, MA
617/267-9300, www.mfa.org

Approximately 140 objects, including furniture, metalwork, drawings, photographs, furniture and stained glass, trace the careers of Boston-trained Arts & Crafts architects and designers Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene.

Félix Candela: Builder, Engineer, Structural Artist

Through September 27
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Museum, Cambridge, MA
617/253-5927, <http://web.mit.edu/museum>

The work of the Spanish-born architect (1910–97), whose hyperbolic paraboloid forms were *tours de force* in thin-shell concrete, is explored in renderings, structural models and photographs.

SOUTH

Picasso and the Allure of Language

August 20, 2009 – January 3, 2010
Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC
919/684-5135, www.nasher.duke.edu

Seventy works by Picasso in various media, as well as related books, manuscripts, letters and ephemera, reveal the artist's love of the written word and his close relationships with writers.

American Art 1950s–1970s

Through October 11
Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX
214/922-1200, www.dallasmuseumofart.org

Postwar paintings, constructions and collages by Joseph Cornell, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Lindner and others.

The Graphic Imperative

Through August 15
Museum of Design Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
404/979-6455, www.museumofdesign.org

More than 100 posters created between 1965 and 2005 demonstrate the power of poster art to advocate for social change.



Courtesy the Ogden Museum.

Above Arthur Q. Davis, Guest House on Bamboo Road, New Orleans, 1958. At the Ogden Museum.

Anthony Ames, Architect: Residential Landscapes

Through August 23
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA
404/733-4444, www.high.org

Paintings, architectural models and dinnerware by Atlanta-based architect Anthony Ames.

Arthur Q. Davis: Legacy of a Modern Architect

Through July 19
Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, LA
504/539-9600, www.ogdenmuseum.org

An overview of the work of one of the rare modernist architects who practiced in New Orleans at mid century.

WEST

Looking In: Robert Frank's *The Americans*
Through August 23

Richard Avedon: Photographs 1946–2004

July 11 – November 29

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
415/357-4000, www.sfmoma.org

An exhibition of all 83 photographs from Frank's 1955–56 book *The Americans*, in which the photographer famously evoked the emotional experience of Americans of that era. Also at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Avedon's journey through the worlds of fashion photography, celebrity portraiture, and photojournalism.

Looking In: Robert Frank's *The Americans*

June 14 – October 26

Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA
213/626-6222, www.moca.org

See SFMOMA, above.

MIX: Nine San Diego Architects and Designers

Through September 6

Museum of Contemporary Arts San Diego, La Jolla, CA
858/454-3541, www.mcasd.org

Recent design by nine San Diego architectural firms whose work has redefined housing design, development and urbanization in the region.

Modernism and the Milton Wichner Collection

Through August 16

Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA
562/439-2119, www.lbma.org

Art, objects and furniture by 20th-century artists and designers, from the well known, like Wassily Kandinsky and the Eameses, to the more obscure, like Californian John A. Kapel.

Paul Outerbridge: Command Performance

Through August 9

J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA
310/440-7300, www.getty.edu

More than 80 prints by Outerbridge (1896–1958), who raised advertising photography to the status of art, demonstrate his mastery of technique and color.

MIDWEST

Andy Warhol Prints: 1974–1986, Works from the Cochran Collection

Through August 16

Cleveland Institute of Art, Cleveland, OH
216/421-7407, www.cia.edu

Iconic and lesser known prints by the pop art master.

Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago

Through December 15

The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
312/443-3600, www.artic.edu

The architect's Chicago urban plan of 1909, which still influences the city today.

The Artistic Furniture of Charles Rohlf

Through August 23

Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI
414/224-3200, www.mam.org

Influenced by Art Nouveau and prefiguring Arts & Crafts furniture, the designs of Charles Rohlf (1853–1936) are explored through 45 examples from his atelier.

INT'L

Futurism

Through September 20

Tate Modern, London, England
+44 20 7887 8888, www.tate.org.uk

A celebration of the Italian art movement's centenary, with works by Umberto Boccioni, Gino Severini, Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, among others.

Kandinsky

Through August 10

Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
+33 1 44 78 12 33, www.centrepompidou.fr

One hundred paintings form the basis of this major retrospective exhibition of the artist's work.

Josef Hoffmann: Inspirations

June 16, 2009 – December 31, 2010

Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brtnice, Czech Republic
+420 567 216 128, www.mak.at

The exhibition rooms at Hoffmann's family home in Brtnice have been redesigned to shed light on the town's artistic influences on the work of the Wiener Werkstätte founder. Organized in collaboration with MAK, Vienna.

Ryijy Rug!

Through September 27

Design Museum Finland, Helsinki, Finland
+ 358 9 622 0540, www.designmuseum.fi

Finland's shaggy, colorful handwoven *ryijy*, known in America as rya rugs.

Below Wassily Kandinsky, *Beginning*, 1928. Watercolor.
At the Long Beach Museum of Art.



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Through October 12

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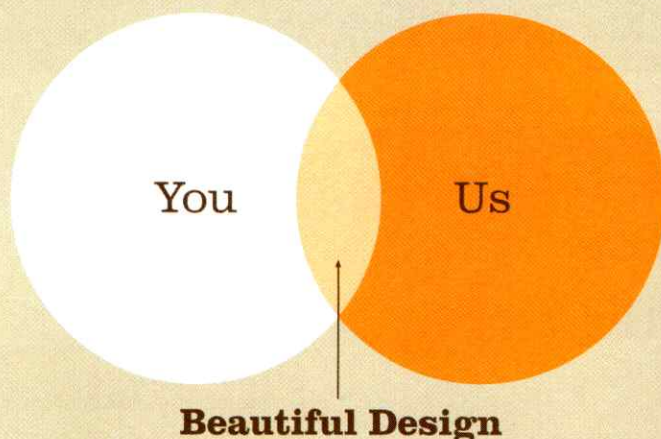
A look at the ephemeral environments created by artists and architects during and after Montréal's Expo '67 World's Fair.

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Above PTW Architects, The Watercube, National Aquatics Centre, Beijing, 2006. At the Louisiana.

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Amazing Journey

A few years ago, as American Airlines prepared to demolish its old terminal at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York, a baggage handler there struck up a conversation with a passenger. He told her he was sorry that the two enormous murals that he had enjoyed for many years would soon exist no more. When she expressed interest, he led her to see the massive 16-by-53-foot murals, which scintillated across from each other at either end of the terminal, and mentioned the artist's name: Carybé. The passenger, who happened to be Brazilian, recognized Carybé as

a celebrated member of the Afro-Brazilian art movement that flourished from the 1930s in Bahia. One of the most important works of art linked to aviation in the United States, the murals were completed in 1960, after Carybé won an international competition held by American Airlines to decorate its new terminal.

Horrified that these masterpieces would be destroyed, the passenger contacted acquaintances at the major Brazilian construction company Odebrecht — it was founded in the city of Bahia — which decided to try save them and came up with the idea of relocating them to the new South Terminal at Miami International Airport, which it had built. American Airlines agreed to donate the murals to Miami Dade County and Odebrecht undertook to remove them. Not having realized that they were painted on the walls themselves and not on detachable panels, Odebrecht found itself captain of an immensely difficult and costly preservation effort: the painted murals, which also incorporated coins, mosaic and other materials, were carefully cut into panels, along with the walls they adhered to, and restored in New York City. Then they were shipped down to Florida and reassembled at Miami International Airport.

Carybé, whose real name was Hector Julio Paride Bernabó, was born in Argentina and lived in Italy before settling in Bahia in 1938, where he lived until his death in 1997. He produced more than 5,000 works of art in his lifetime, including paintings, engravings, wood carvings and mosaics, as well as illustrations for books by writers such as Jorge Amado.

The unveiling of the reborn murals, one entitled *Rejoicing and Festivals of the Americas*, the other *Discovery and Settlement of the West*, will take place on June 25.

—Andrea Truppin



Above The artist Carybé at work on his mural *Discovery and Settlement of the West* in 1960.

Top Carybé, *Rejoicing and Festivals of the Americas*, 1960.

A Sensualist Returns

In the 1950s, furniture designer Vladimir Kagan broke with the rectilinear strictness of Miesian design to make fabulously sensual furniture, all dramatic sweeps and curves, yet restrained and pure of line, marrying luscious upholstery with shapely wooden legs that splayed like a young colt's. Ralph Pucci International, which has reissued furniture by modernist masters like Jens Risom, has recreated ten pieces of furniture by Kagan. Called the Lost Masterpieces, they range from the armless upholstered *Fireside* chair (1950) and the *Branch* coffee table (1952), with elegant criss-crossed sculpted walnut legs supporting a travertine top, to the Plexiglas *Lotus* chair of 1971, with an upholstered seat that seems to float in mid air. Available exclusively through Ralph Pucci International. For more information: 212/633-0452, www.ralphpucci.net. —AT



Above Vladimir Kagan, *Countour chaise*, 1951, molded upholstered polyfoam and walnut wood, \$11,760.

Relighting

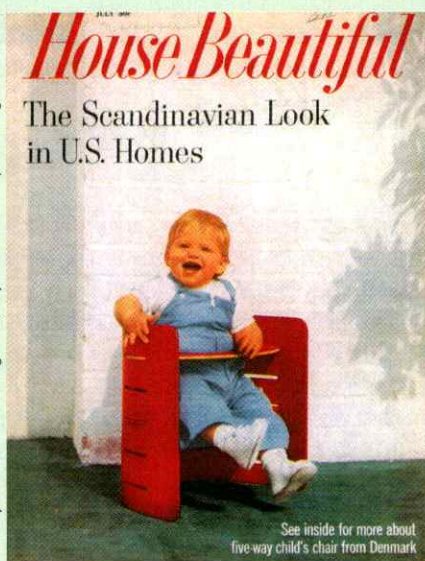
J.T. Kalmar of Vienna, founded in the 1870s, was a force in early 20th-century lighting, developing cast bronze fixtures with designers like Adolf Loos and Josef Frank and other members of the Secession movement and the Wiener Werkstätte. The company moved on to designing and producing large scale lighting for major architectural projects. Now, San Francisco-based lighting designer Jonathan Browning has teamed up with Kalmar to reissue a number of fixtures drawn from the company's treasure trove of early 20th-century designs. The initial 11-piece collection includes sconces, chandeliers, pendants and a torchiere in rosewood, bronze, crystal and other materials. Kalmar's original intent was to produce "good modern lighting appliances at reasonable prices." Today's versions range from \$685 for the *Keule* single pendant to \$12,330 for the *Ebensee* chandelier in rosewood. For more information, visit www.jonathanbrowninginc.com. —AT

Right *Keule* crystal pendant with halo, 1940s design. Opal glass, satin matte finish; leaded and hammered crystal; black bronze; textile cord. \$1,060.



REAL MODERN: IT'S CHILD'S PLAY AGAIN

Courtesy House Beautiful magazine, July 1959. Photo by John Engstead.



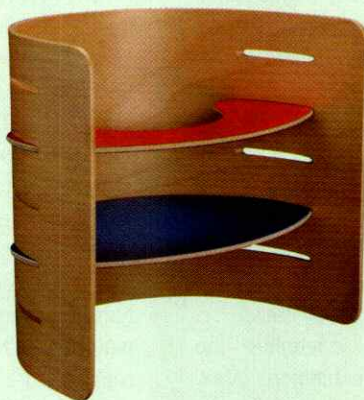
In July, 1959, *House Beautiful* devoted its entire issue to Scandinavian modernism, putting architect Kristian Vedel's multipurpose child's chair in red aniline-dyed plywood on its cover. Designed in 1952, the chair converted from high chair to child's chair to table to rocking toy, and became a midcentury favorite. Manufacturer Torben Ørskov eventually discontinued the chair, leaving vintage examples — about \$300 to \$400 at auction — as the only source of supply. The old version eventually became too scarce and fragile to use as intended. Now a new Danish company, Architect Made, has reissued the chair in natural plywood with two painted elements. While at \$590 it's more expensive than a vintage original, it's rugged, ready for an active child's use. Available through ModernChild, www.modernchild.net.

Other designers have riffed on Vedel's use of plywood to create modernist children's furniture, as in Lisa Albin's new *Mod Desk Set* for Iglooplay. A low desk has been combined with a small rocking chair to create a fidget-free play and study space; the pair is available in birch, cherry or walnut-veneered plywood, and a maintenance-free rubber pad can be added to the chair. Available from AllModernBaby, www.allmodernbaby.com; prices begin at \$432 for the birch version without the chair pad. —Sandy McLendon

Above The July 1959 cover of *House Beautiful* gave most Americans their first glimpse of Kristian Vedel's versatile, red aniline-dyed child's chair.

Far right AllModernBaby.com's *Iglooplay* child's desk set is available in several woods that can be mixed and matched.

Right Vedel's child's chair has been reissued in a new painted color combination.



A Low Profile Raised

Peter Zumthor, a reclusive Swiss architect largely unknown to the public, has been awarded the 2009 Pritzker Prize for architecture. Zumthor has never accumulated the sort of high-profile commissions that make an architect a household word and his built works do not follow a pattern or share a look. His best-known building is a spa in Vals, Switzerland, for the Hotel Therme. Built of carefully stacked quartzite blocks, it conjures the sensual quality of Roman baths. Zumthor's specialty is making unusual use of common materials: the interior of his 2007 Field Chapel in Mechernich, Germany, was shaped by leaning 112 tree trunks against one another in the form of a tent, gradually layering them with concrete, then drying the trunks over three weeks with a smoldering fire so that they could be removed, leaving their gnarly and mysterious impressions in the concrete walls. Molten lead was poured *in situ* for the floor. But unconventionality is not a Zumthor goal in and of itself; his Kunsthaus Bregenz, an art museum in Voralberg, Austria, has a Bauhausian façade clad in etched glass.

Born in 1943 in Basel, Switzerland, the son of a cabinetmaker, Zumthor began his career as apprentice to a carpenter. In the mid-1960s, he studied at New York's Pratt Institute and in 1968 became an architect for the Department for the Preservation of Monuments in Graubünden, Switzerland. This work gave him the appreciation for rusticity and traditional building methods that informs the exquisite detailing of his buildings today.

"Zumthor has a keen ability to create places that are much more than a single building," said Pritzker Prize jury chairman Lord Peter Palumbo. "His architecture expresses respect for the primacy of the site, the legacy of a local culture and the invaluable lessons of architectural history." —SM

Herbert Bayer Time

This summer, designer Herbert Bayer is in the spotlight. A prodigious polymath, he did justice to the multi-disciplinary aspirations of his Bauhaus training, breaking new ground in graphic design, typography, photography and advertising, and producing admirable work in painting, sculpture, architecture and landscape design. Apprenticed in 1919 to architect Georg Schmidthamer in Linz, Austria, Bayer enrolled at the Bauhaus in 1921 and became head of the school's workshop for print and advertising after his 1925 graduation. By 1928, he was famed for his reductive approach to graphic design and widely admired for his magazine covers. He worked as art director for *Vogue*, first in Berlin, then in Paris. In 1938, he immigrated to the United States, and in 1946, moved to Aspen, Colorado, where he became a consultant to the Aspen Institute, a think tank devoted to public policy issues.

Linz, Austria, celebrates the designer with two exhibitions: "Ahoi, Herbert! Bayer and Modernism," through August 2 at the Lentos Art Museum (+43 732 7070 3600,

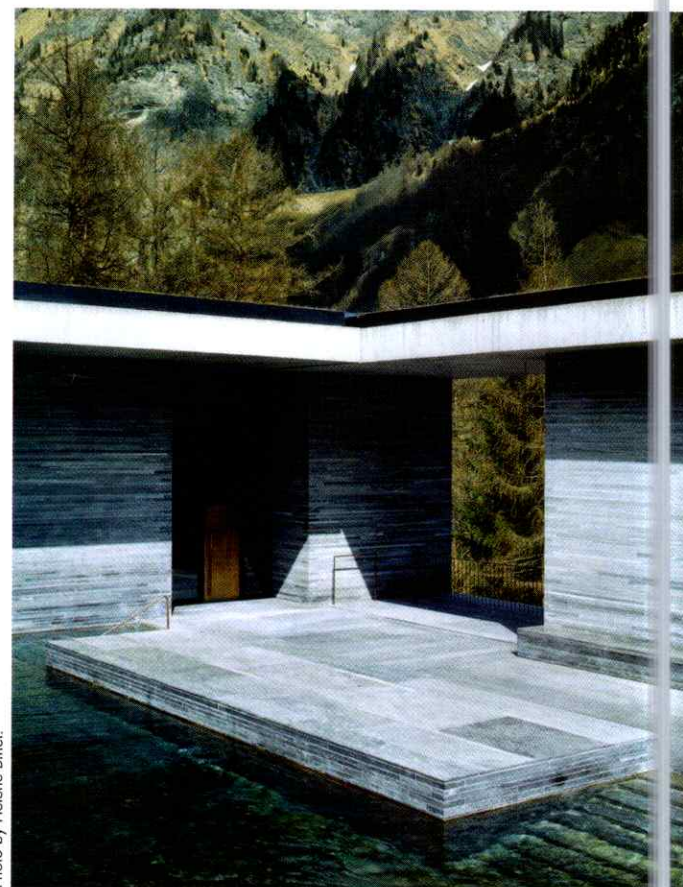


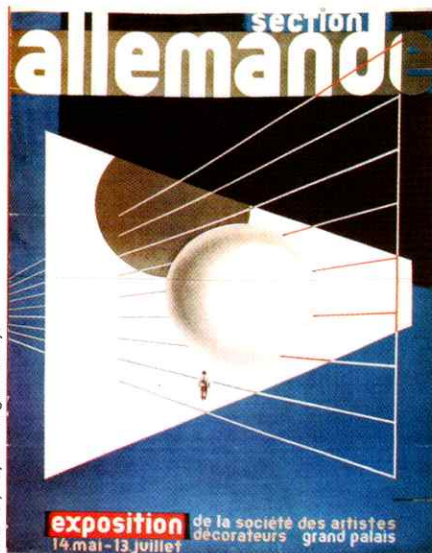
Photo by Helene Binet.

Above Peter Zumthor, Thermal Bath Vals, Graubünden, Switzerland, 1996.

www.lentos.at) and "Shedding Light on Art," an outdoor display of Bayer's sculpture through the end of 2009 (+43 732 2009, www.linz09.at).

In the United States, the Peyton Wright Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico, along with the Emil Nelson Gallery in Los Angeles, which together represent the Bayer estate worldwide, have organized "Herbert Bayer: Fifty Years of Prints, 1930-1980," which includes previously unseen works. The show will be at the Emil Nelson Gallery from September 1 to October 1 (310/266-9904). "Herbert Bayer: Paintings, Sculptures and Prints" will be at the David Floria Gallery in Aspen, Colorado, from July 3 to 24 (970/544-5705, www.floriagallery.com). Also in Aspen, Bayer's famous Bayer-Benedict music tent at the Aspen Music Festival celebrates its 45th anniversary with a new iteration by architect Harry Teague, based on Bayer's original (970/205-5023, www.aspenmusicfestival.com, June 25 through August 23). And the Resnick Gallery at the Aspen Institute hosts "Geometry of an Illusionist: The Anthology Paintings of Herbert Bayer, 1976-1983," a show of paintings, drawings and prints created in the last decade of Bayer's life that put images, letters, numbers, geometric forms and shapes that had appeared previously in his career into a new context, exploring philosophical ideas, mathematical systems and conceptual theories (970/925-4240, www.aspeninstitute.org, June 29 through September 4).

—SM



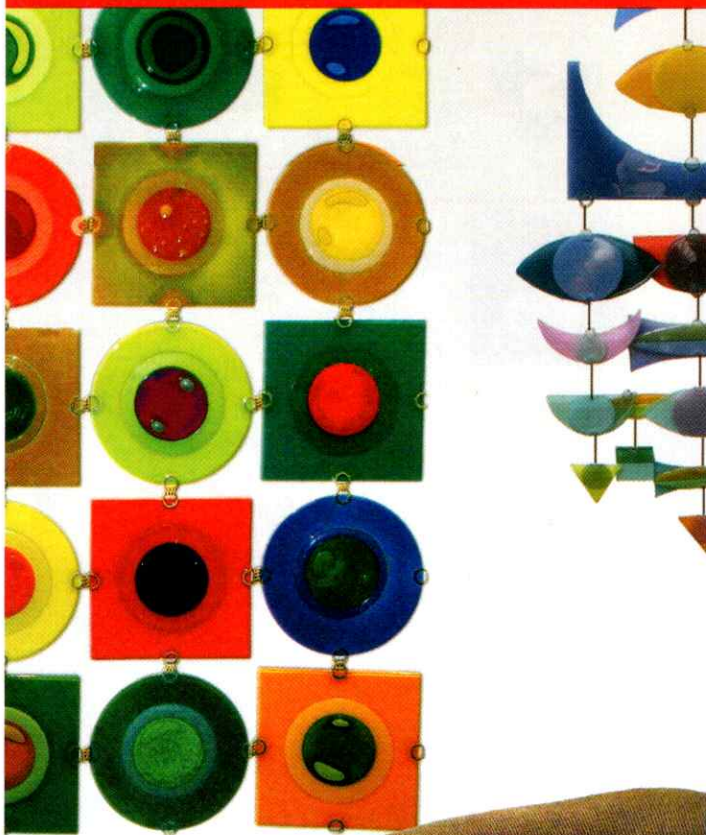
Courtesy Peyton Wright Gallery.

Above The graphic look of 1930s and 1940s magazines was enormously influenced by Bayer's prewar work for German publications.



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PAULO WERNECK

Art on Walls

By Carlos Martins



Above Paulo Werneck in his apartment in Laranjeiras, an old Rio de Janeiro neighborhood, c. 1945.

Top This fragment of a ceramic mosaic panel, removed from a house in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is one of the few surviving examples of a marine theme in Paulo Werneck's work. The complete mosaic stretched for 21 feet.

Opposite, top Ceramic mosaic mural in the Bank of Brazil Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, 1961. The Bank of Brazil commissioned nearly 100 Werneck murals for branches across the country.

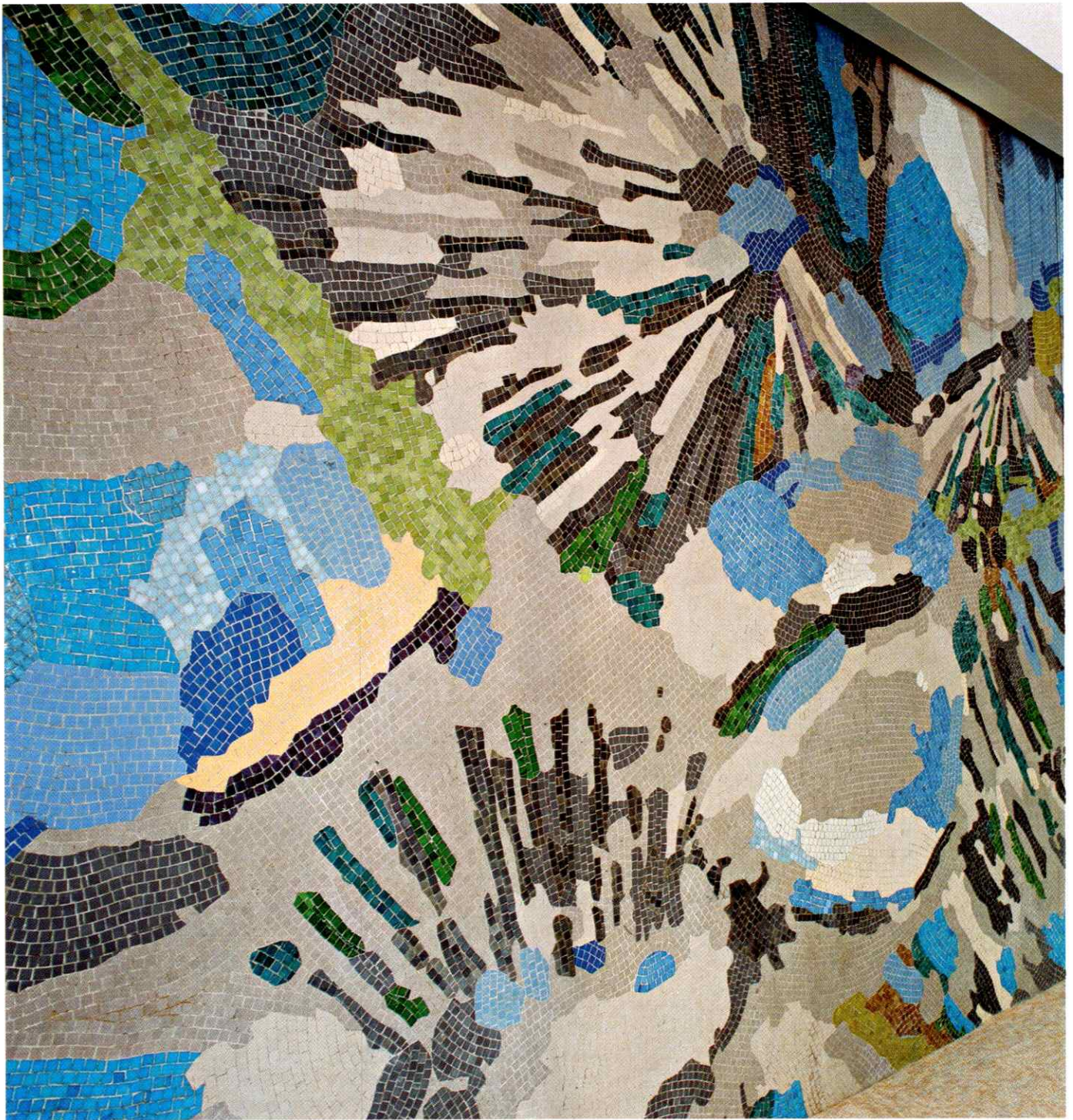
Opposite, bottom Study for mural for the Bank of Brazil Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, gouache on paper, 1961.

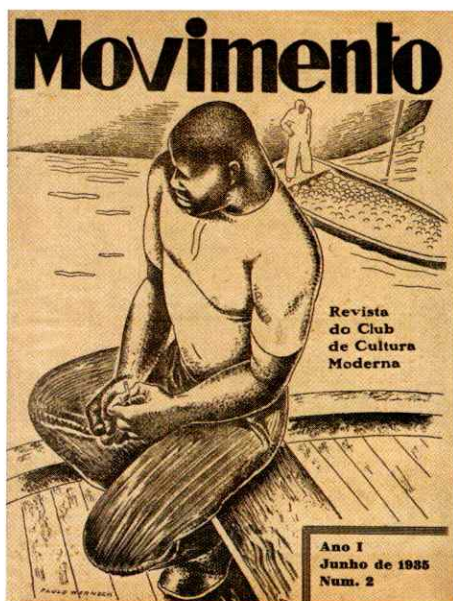
Long overlooked, perhaps because his signature mosaic murals were so well integrated into the architecture they adorned, Brazilian artist Paulo Werneck might finally be getting his due. The Paulo Werneck Project, spearheaded by his daughter, artist Regina Werneck, and his grandchildren, Claudia, Paula and Gaspar Saldanha, and supported by the Petrobras oil company, is introducing the man and his work to a public that might well have lived among his creations without ever thinking much about them. His murals can be found on dozens of high rises, houses and public buildings in cities across Brazil, where they provide a dynamic, colorful complement to the country's modernist architecture. His mosaic designs continue to give the buildings a unique character and bring them into sharp relief within the chaotic expansion of Brazil's major cities. The project has located the surviving murals of the more than 200 he created in his lifetime and registered 43 of these as national heritage sites, ensuring their protection. The project has also catalogued Werneck's papers, drawings, illustrations and photographs and created a website to preserve and disseminate his work (www.projectopaulowerneck.com.br). The project recently mounted a retrospective exhibition at the Paço Imperial Museum in Rio de Janeiro, which will travel to São Paulo in early 2010.

Self-taught, inquisitive, highly skilled and attracted to challenges and experimentation, Paulo Werneck (1907–87) began his artistic career as an architectural draftsman and illustrator. In 1928, at the age of 21, he shared a small studio with a friend and former schoolmate from Colégio Zacharias in Catete, Marcelo Roberto, who was then an architecture student. Roberto would go on to fame as partner, with his two brothers, Milton and Mauricio, in the groundbreaking architecture firm MMM Roberto Architects.

For more than two decades, Werneck's drawings, with their firm lines and precisely defined volumes, multiple textures, deep blacks

Photo by Vicente de Mello.





Above Paulo Werneck's cover for the magazine *Movimento*, 1935.

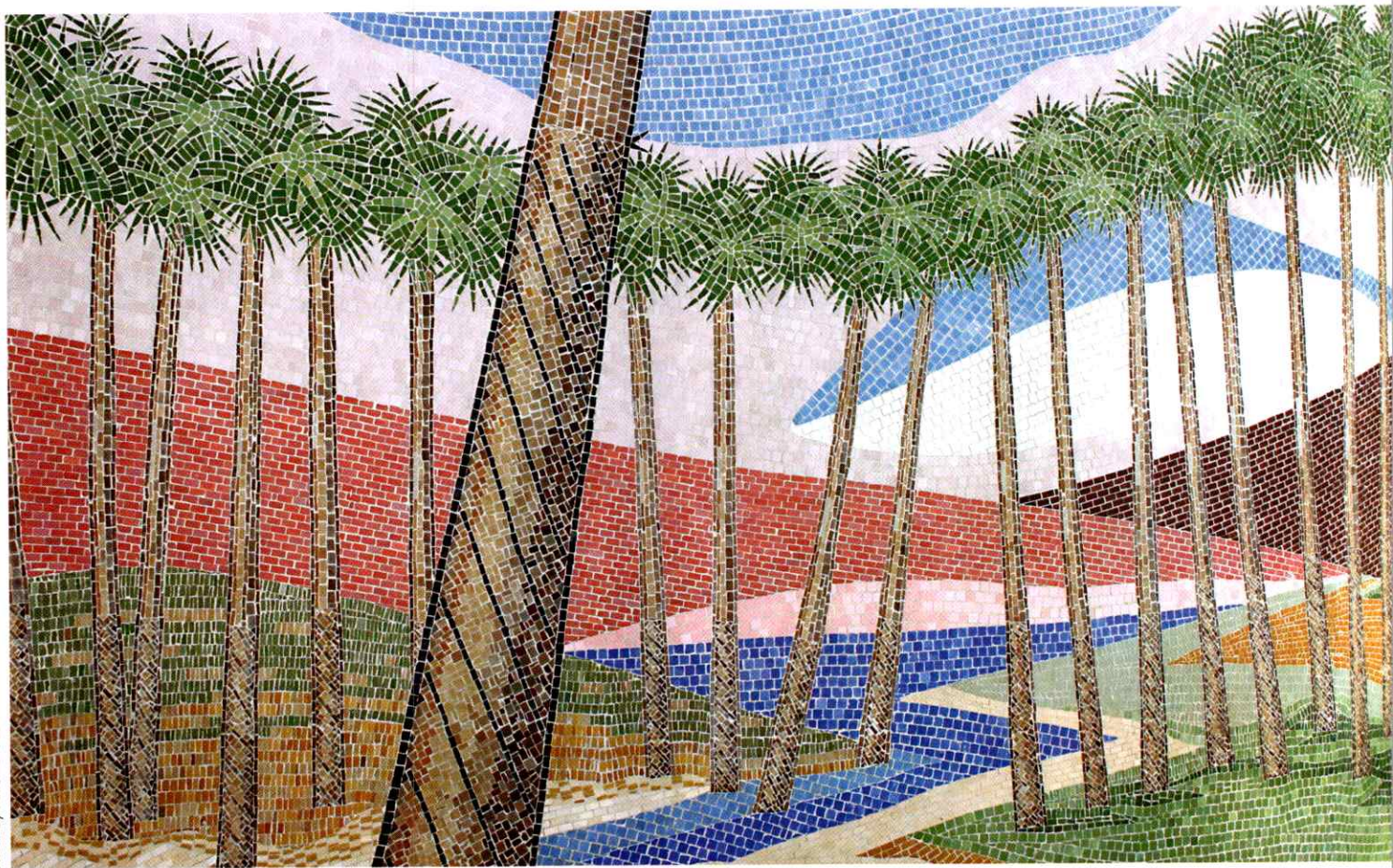
Top Study in gouache on paper for a mural at the National Service for the Improvement of Industry, 1948.

Center Ceramic mosaic mural in a classroom at the National Service for the Improvement of Industry, 1948.

and planes of light and dark, illustrated the pages of many of Rio de Janeiro's newspapers and magazines. Werneck's talent as an illustrator is evident in *Lenda da Carnaubeira*, a book published by the Ministry of Education in 1939, which contains imaginative prints he submitted for a 1936 competition to create images for "children up to 7 years of age." In the preface, Brazilian poet Manuel Bandeira comments that "the artist's pictures enchanted me with their captivating innocence, which seems to me so close to the sensitivity of the early years of childhood, and the simplicity of the composition and lines." At the same time, his work as a draftsman for several leading architects provided him with an indispensable source of income. Among these were his old school friends, Firmino Saldanha and Oscar Niemeyer.

Werneck was sensitive to the country's political changes since the economic crisis of 1929, most notably a military *coup d'état* in 1930 that overthrew the agricultural oligarchies that had dominated the country since its liberation from the Portuguese in 1822, installing dictator Getúlio Vargas. Werneck was active in movements that resisted the rise of Nazi fascism in the country and his illustrations throughout the upheavals of the 1930s reflect his concern with social equity and dignity. Yet despite his left-wing tendencies, his work avoids the pedantic tone of much Social Realist art, rather recording man's relationship with his urban and industrial environment, popular culture and festivals, regional legends and traditions with an idealistic, optimistic outlook.

One example of the connection between Werneck's political leanings and his involvement in the arts is his participation in *Movimento*, a magazine produced by the Clube de Cultura Moderna (Modern Culture Club), whose members were artists and intellectuals who supported Luís Carlos Prestes, a leader of the Communist opposition to the Vargas dictatorship, and the left-wing Aliança Nacional Libertadora (National Liberation Alliance). Established in early 1935, the club had an intensely productive — but short — lifespan because of a violent government crackdown; only



four issues of the magazine were published. Werneck designed one of its covers and participated in the first exhibition of Social Realist art in Brazil in 1935, along with artists Emiliano di Cavalcanti, Tomás Santa Rosa, José Cândido Portinari, Oswaldo Goeldi, Alberto da Veiga Guignard and others.

The political changes of 1930 had fostered Brazil's move from agricultural to industrial production, encouraging the development of cities and setting the foundations for a modern economy. In its bid to change the face of the nation and enhance its own prestige with the population, the Vargas dictatorship pumped vast amounts of money into civil construction. "An extraordinary explosion of modern architecture was seen in Brazil, particularly in the monumental architecture of the sumptuous official buildings and projects," says art critic and writer Mário Pedrosa. "It was at this time that Brazil's first modern architects emerged. A first-class legion of youthful figures took Brazil and by the end of World War II had made her into a nation of the architectural vanguard."

The new Brazilian architecture, which mapped out novel routes while obeying the precepts of modernism, fostered greater integration among the arts. When a wall needed enhancement or drama, artists were brought in as collaborators. The first great example of this cooperation was the Ministry of Education and



Above Ceramic mosaic mural at the Maracati Building, Rio de Janeiro, 1950.

Top Ceramic mosaic mural at the José Torquato Pessoa Building, Rio de Janeiro, 1954.

Health Building, today the Gustavo Capanema Building, in the then-capital city, Rio de Janeiro. This modernist landmark was begun in 1936, but the execution of its refined design took almost a decade to complete. It was the result of the synergy of a team of architects invited by Lúcio Costa, under the consultancy of Le Corbusier, and a group of artists, including Roberto Burle Marx for landscape design, Alberto da Veiga Guignard, paintings, and José Cândido Portinari, who designed a number of wall panels, including the tile panel on the façade, which dates from 1941. Proposals for sculptures were put forward by Celso Antônio, Bruno Giorgi, Alfredo Ceschiatti and Jacques Lipchitz.

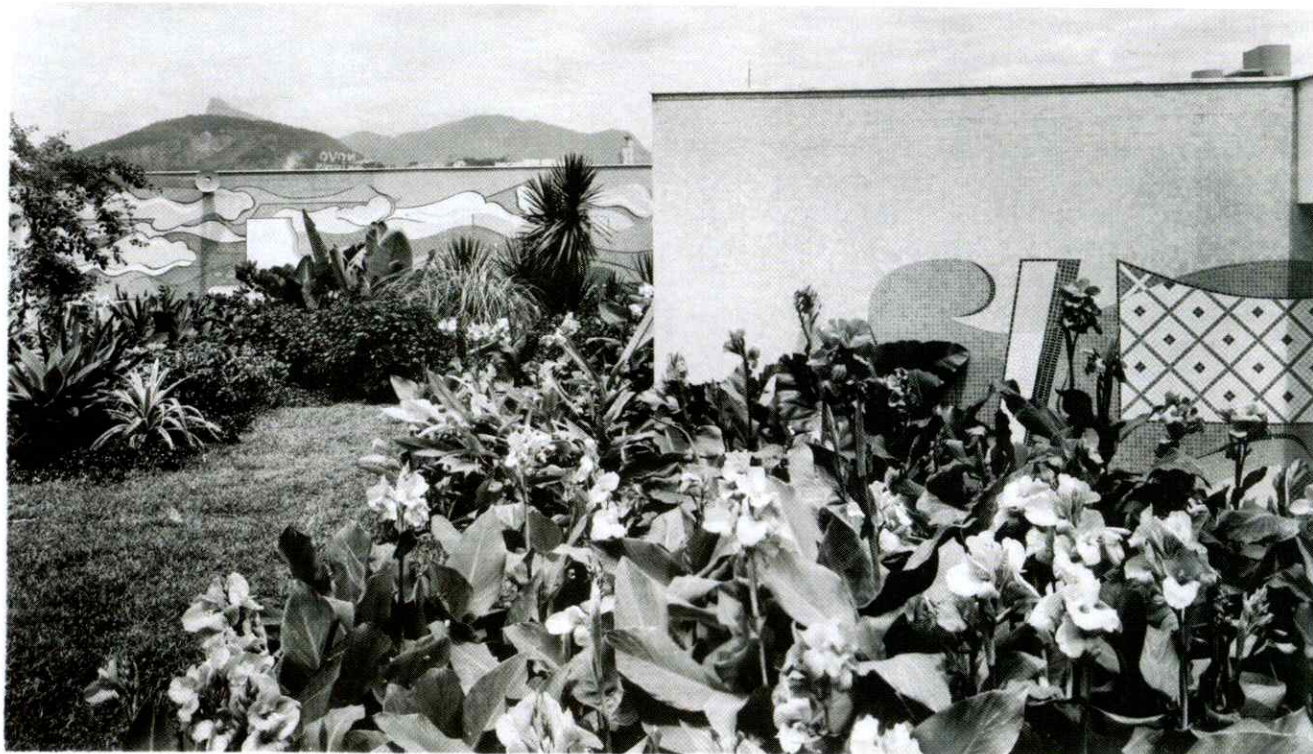
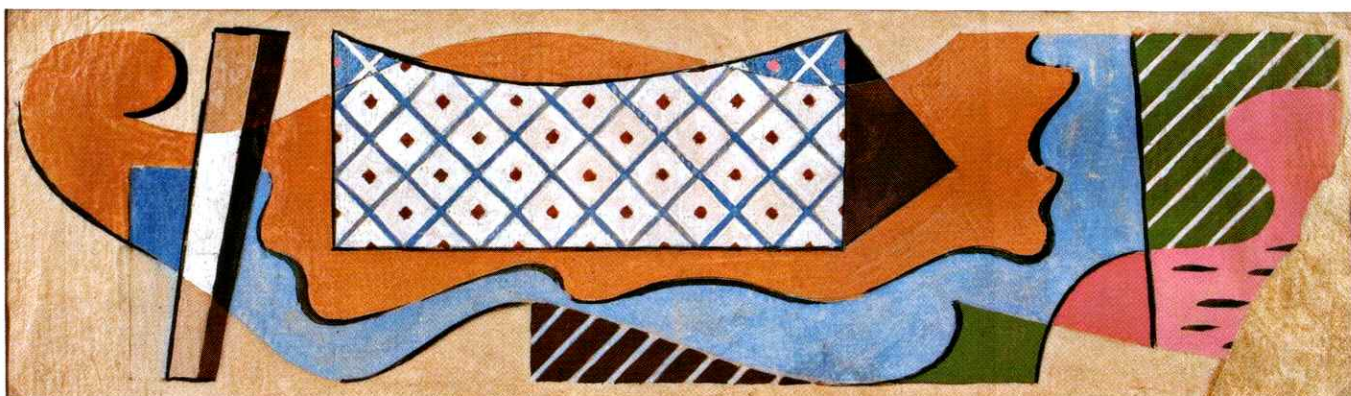
Werneck's first opportunity to be engaged in such a project came in 1942, when he was invited by Marcelo Roberto to design the decorative panels for a roof garden at the Brazilian Institute of Reinsurance in Rio. Initially, Werneck considered

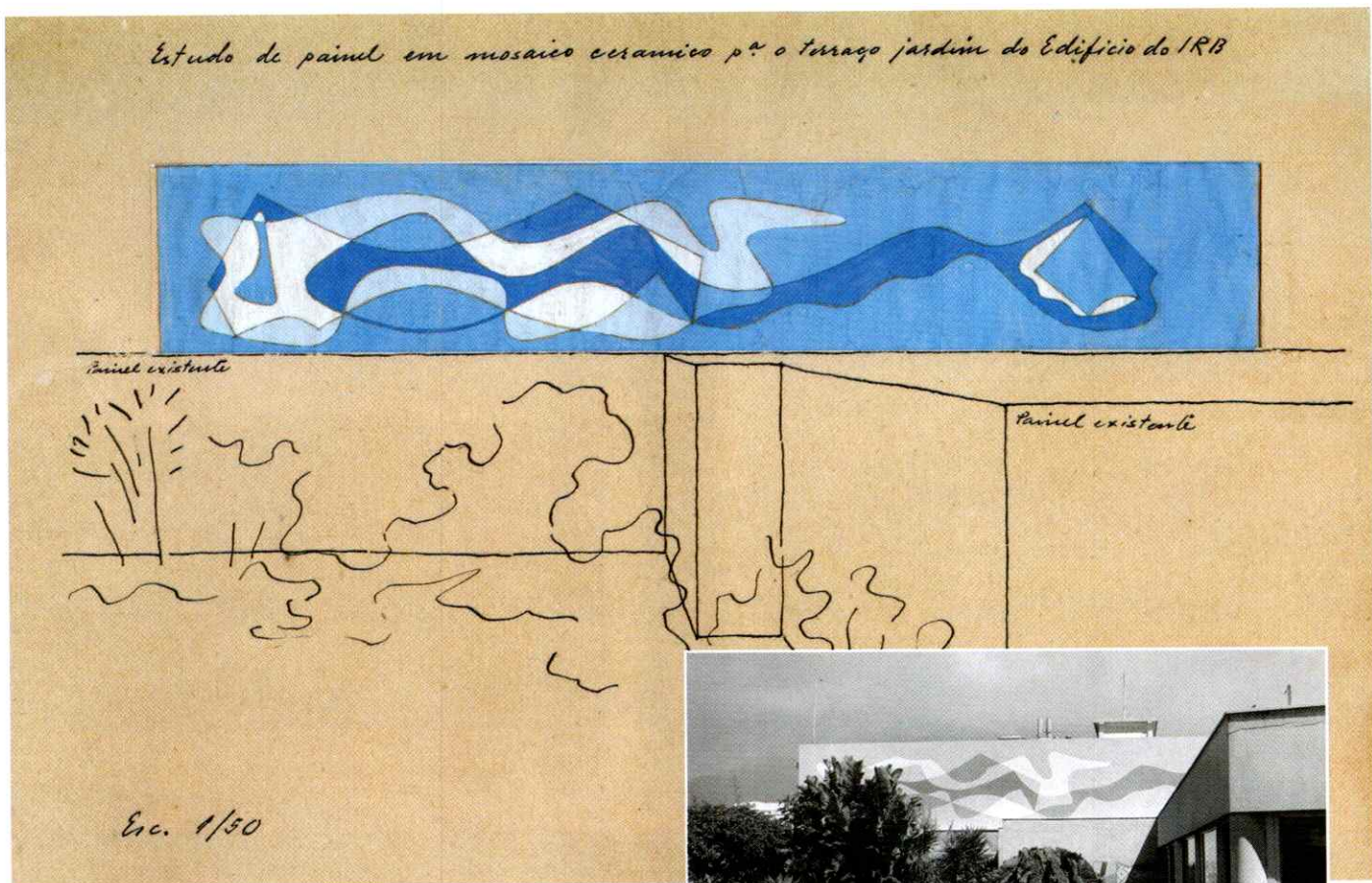
using ceramic tile but, as he later recalled, Roberto "suggested using the older tradition of mosaic, which had been abandoned for centuries or reduced to the function of imitating religious painting." Roberto also put him in touch with Jorge Ludolf, owner of Cerâmica Brasileira, the largest ceramics manufacturer in the country, from whom he gained not only the materials and information he needed, but great enthusiasm and encouragement. Ceramic mosaic tiles had been used in Brazil for many years as patterned floor and wall coverings, and they were manufactured to a high standard of quality. In 1955, in an interview published in the magazine *Módulo*, Werneck said:

This material, which was completely new to me, was no disappointment. Once the initial hurdles were overcome — which were not insignificant — I had the joy of seeing my intentions

Bottom Ceramic mosaic murals on the rooftop terrace of the Brazilian Institute of Reinsurance, Rio de Janeiro, 1942; architecture by MMM Roberto. These murals have been destroyed.

Below Study in gouache on tracing paper for a Brazilian Institute of Reinsurance mural, 1942.





Above Drawing in gouache on tracing paper for a Brazilian Institute of Reinsurance mural, 1944.

Right Ceramic mosaic mural at the Brazilian Institute of Reinsurance, Rio de Janeiro, 1942.

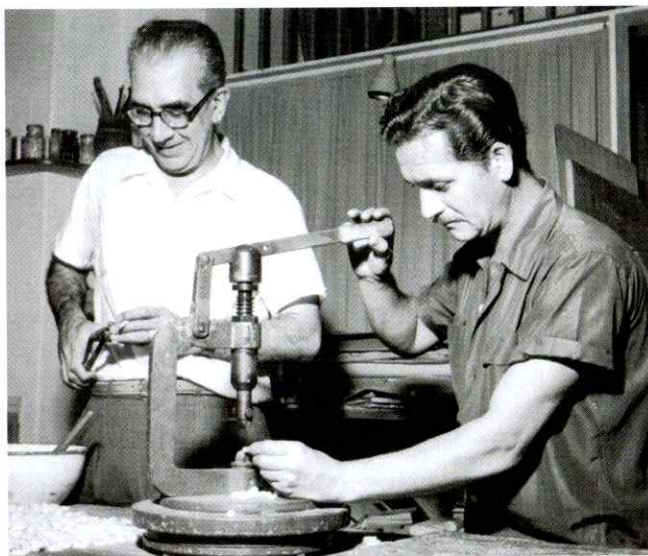
Right, bottom Paulo Werneck with his assistant, Germinal Bueno, in his workshop in Laranjeiras, 1945; Werneck designed the mosaic cutting tool.

take shape. Thus, the development of the artwork, from the first sketches; the basic project; assembling the panel, when each ceramic piece put in place corresponds to a brushstroke; putting it in place on the wall and the work that finally emerges as a definitive feature of the building; the certainty that the colors that meet our eyes are unchanging and will withstand sun and rain, heat and cold, weathering and the movements of the medium, whether it be masonry or concrete: all this lifts the spirit of the artist and more than makes up for the hard work involved; because, I must say, it is very hard to work with mosaic.

Now in his 30s, Werneck plunged into the creation of murals, embracing the dual roles of artist and artisan. Typically, an artist would conceive design schemes for tiles or stained glass to be executed by specialized studios. But since Werneck regarded the finished panel as his work, he undertook all the production tasks himself to make sure that the final result truly bore his stamp. And although his gouache paintings were intended as studies for the murals, they are almost unfailingly meticulous: miniature paintings on paper. These paintings also



Photo by Marcel Gauthier/
Instituto Moreira Salles.



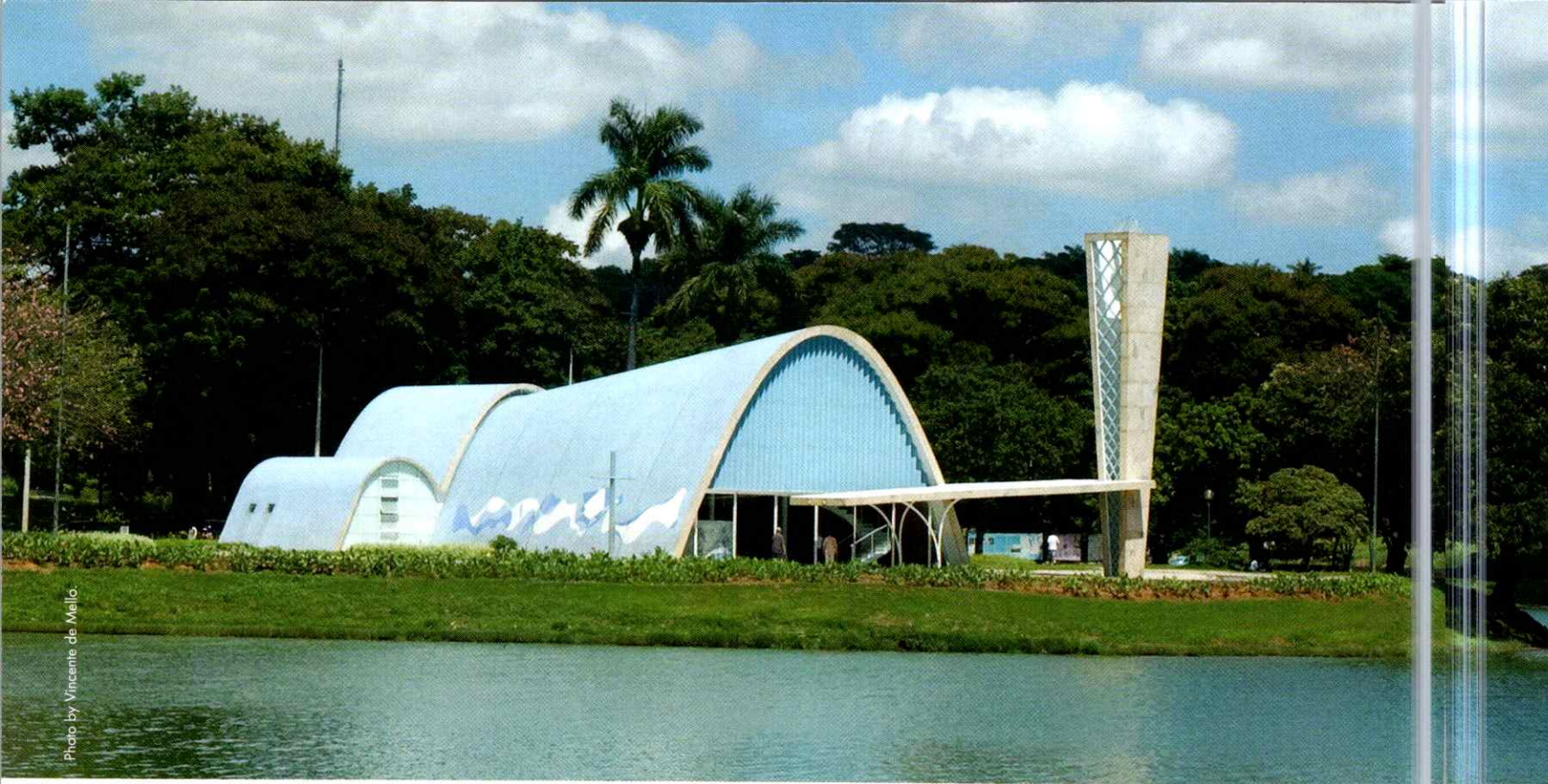
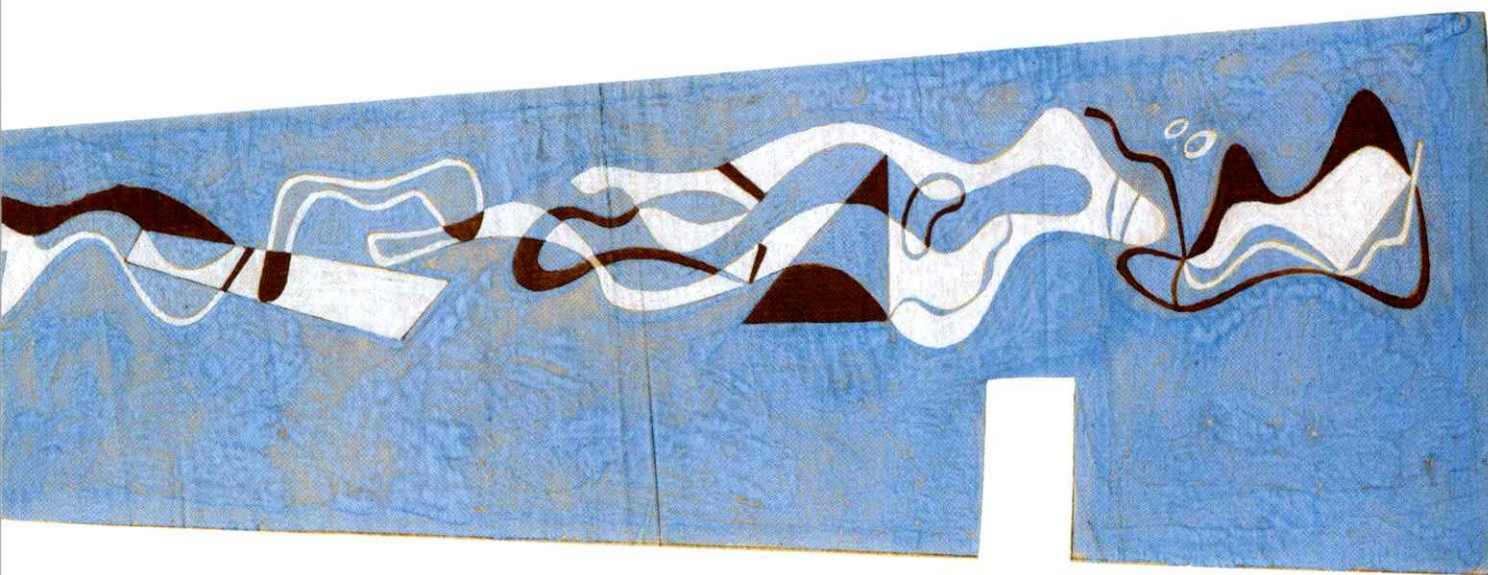


Photo by Vicente de Mello.



highlight Werneck's perfect sense of scale; his designs may be small compared to the finished murals, but their spatial organization is harmoniously controlled, condensing the strength of compositions envisaged for a massive scale.

Werneck worked in his studio with a small team, cutting the manufactured mosaic tiles himself to make sure that each color would have the desired shape. This procedure also meant, at times, that each plane of color was visually enriched by the juxtaposition of small fragments of ceramic of different shapes and shades. As he described the process: "We make mosaics by sticking them onto paper using a very weak glue that's strong enough to hold when we cut out the part that's already done and deliver it to the professionals we called *ladrilheiros* (tilers),

though later the expression *pastilheiro* (mosaic tiler) was coined." These were the craftsmen in charge of fixing the mosaics onto the final surface. Werneck preferred to work with ceramic mosaic, rather than glass, for façades, since it did not reflect strong sunlight. For interiors, he also used glass mosaic.

When Werneck was asked to create his first murals for the Brazilian Institute of Reinsurance in 1942, quite surprisingly he prepared non-figurative studies for five of the six commissioned panels. These were to go on the walls of the rooftop terrace, melding harmoniously with Burle Marx's landscape design and overlooking an area of downtown Rio de Janeiro that was being redeveloped.

It was an extraordinarily daring and novel approach, particularly



Photo by Vicente de Mello.

Above St. Francis of Assisi Church in Pampulha, designed by Oscar Niemeyer, with ceramic mosaic murals by Werneck.

Inset Detail of Pampulha mosaic.

Opposite Study for Pampulha mural in gouache on paper, 1944.

Below Ceramic mosaic mural at the Cataguases School, 1947; architecture by Oscar Niemeyer.



Photo by Antonio Caetano.



since Werneck was experimenting for the first time with the purely formal potential of his compositions, using strong colors, clearly defined planes and stylized forms. It is likely that his inspiration came from the modernity of the architecture and the rooftop terrace design, the location of the building and its purpose, as well as the urban landscape that formed the terrace's backdrop.

Nothing could have been more unexpected from an artist of such firm political convictions with an established career as an illustrator, in whose work social themes were a constant, especially at a time when the Mexican muralists, with their clear social agenda, were widely admired in Brazil. In 1935, Aníbal Machado

had suggested that the decoration of walls be handed over to "the country's true artists so that they may inscribe on them the shapes and symbols that kindle the interest of the masses, just like what is done in Mexico by Rivera, Orozco and Siquieros."

Nevertheless, Werneck's work with mosaics was immediately and broadly acclaimed and new commissions followed. In 1943, architect Luiz Moura ordered five mosaic panels for a terrace at the top of the new Ministry of Finance Building. As Werneck once recalled, Moura "contacted me to do them. And he said, 'You're part of the modern movement, but you know how to draw. You're going to do the mosaics for the ministry, and there's no restriction on the topic.' I was surprised." The first designs he submitted were turned down because their stylized figures were considered too modern, however, and did not suit the ministry's architectural project. Werneck then drew on his repertoire as an illustrator and proposed national motifs from indigenous legends and nature. "I worked with models," he recalled. "One of my helpers posed as an Indian. For the female Indian, I had a professional from the School of Fine Arts pose. The man represented an Indian warrior who defended the missions in the service of the Jesuits."

Throughout his career, although he produced many more abstract compositions and it is these that attract more interest today, Werneck also created additional murals with figurative elements if they fit the needs of the project, as well as modular panels with repeating geometric designs. If commissioned, he would consider figurative themes, although his compositions were often hybrids in which figurative elements appeared alongside abstract forms. He also built up a repertoire of "realistic" motifs covering subjects such as sports, sea fantasies and native vegetation. "Whenever I can, I think in national terms," he said. "The

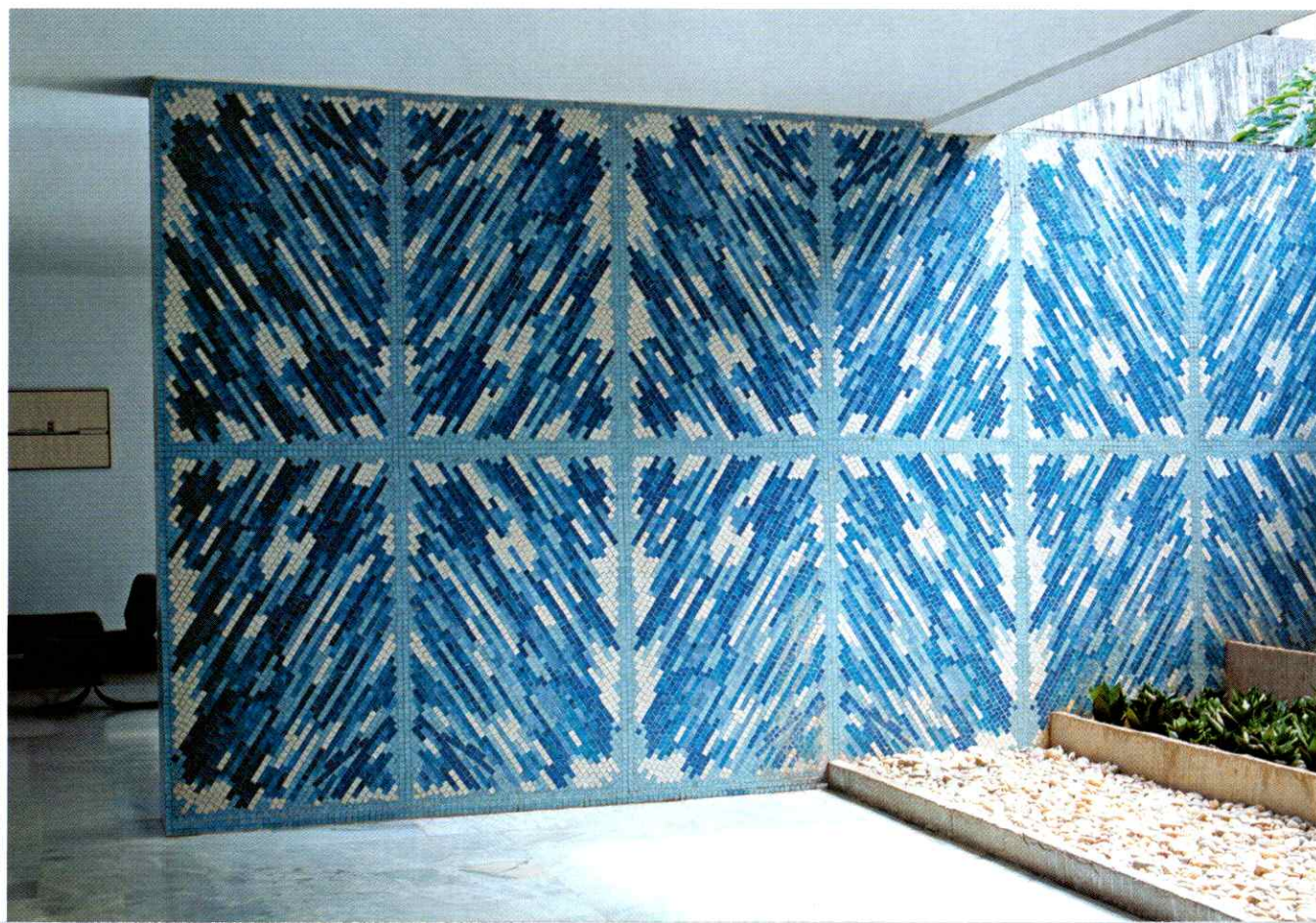


Photo by Vicente de Mello.



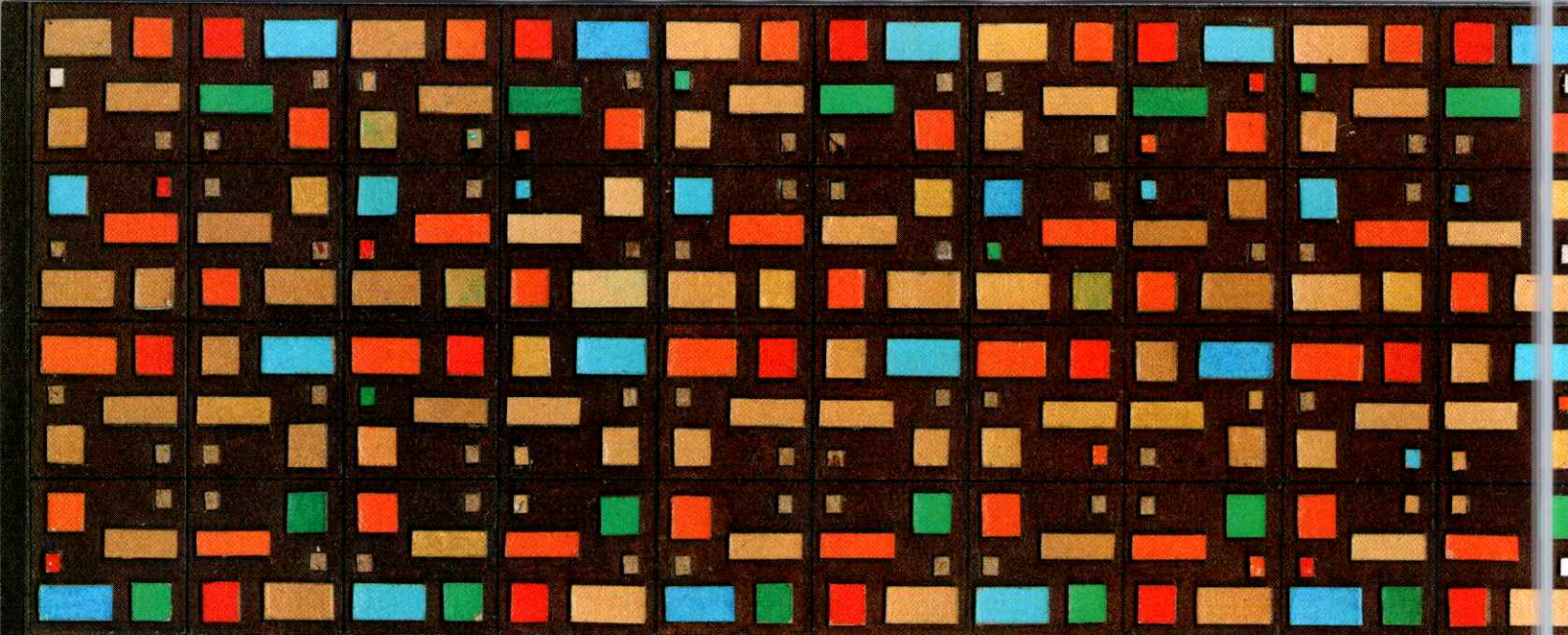
Opposite, top Paulo Werneck, right, with architect Oscar Niemeyer, left, and structural engineer Joaquim Cardoso in Pampulha, 1947.

Opposite, bottom Glass mosaic mural at the Itamaraty Building, headquarters of the Foreign Ministry, Brasília, c. 1960; architecture by Oscar Niemeyer.

Above Ceramic mosaic mural at the Insurance Building, Rio de Janeiro, 1949; architecture by MMM Roberto.

Right Ceramic mosaic mural at the Guarabira Building, 1955; architecture by MMM Roberto.





Above Wood mural at the Bank of Brazil Meier, 1970.

Top Study for a mural at the Bank of Brazil Meier, 1970. Gouache and collage on cardboard.

Opposite, top Glass mosaic mural at the Brasília Palace Hotel, 1958; architecture by Oscar Niemeyer. The mosaic was destroyed in a fire.

Opposite, bottom Study for mural at the Brasília Palace Hotel, 1958, in gouache on paper, showing scale.

Indians, our roots, nature"; so the Indians from the 1943 Ministry of Finance Building reappeared at the entrance to the Maracati Building in Leme in 1949.

Werneck always believed that the essential function of murals was to decorate and complement the architecture and he worked with the unconcerned air of the artist who is aware of the prevalent concepts of his day, of academic traditions that separate the "fine arts" from the "applied arts," and has clearly chosen to produce an applied art accessible to ordinary people and a part of their everyday lives. His work, therefore, remained on the fringes of exhibitions and galleries, apart from critical notice. Yet it contained visual elements that were new at the time, often preceding the expressions and movements that would bring abstractionism into the mainstream of Brazilian art. In speaking about the lack of subjects, natural forms, allegory and symbolism in much of his own work, Werneck acknowledged the "influence of cubist style, and we cannot forget that the same influence gave rise to abstractionism."

The abstract works revealed through research for the Paulo Werneck Project can be classified into four distinct sets of designs that share many features, even though they were produced at different times in the artist's career. In the first compositions, produced for the Brazilian Institute of Reinsurance in 1942, the images are confined within a rectangle defined as their support. The layering of stylized forms, the strong colors, the use of diagonals cutting across the planes and the simulation of a milky velatura glaze suggest vague images related to architecture and cityscape.

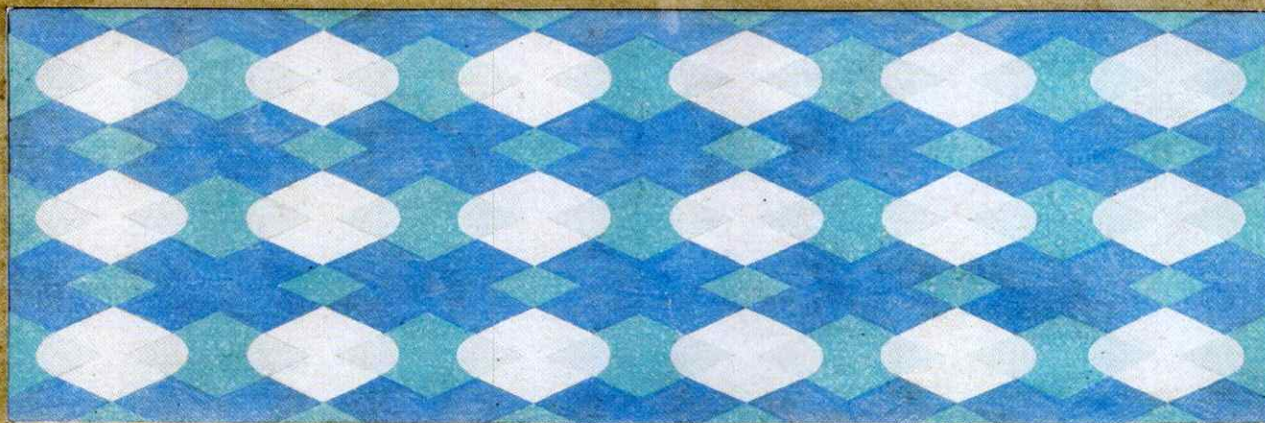
The designs of the second group embrace the entire available surface and have become completely abstract. Almost always monochromatic, these compositions are predominantly blue and white. The intertwined, overlapping elongated forms occasionally suggest recognizable geometric elements. Of these murals, the two on St. Francis of Assisi Church in Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, deserve special mention. These were the first works by the artist to be conceived for large surfaces, each one some 60 feet long. At the invitation of Oscar Niemeyer, muralist Cândido Portinari recreated scenes from the life of the saint in a tile

panel. The Portinari panel, which was completed in 1944, gave rise to controversy as conservatives took offense at the way the figures were represented. Indeed, the bold architectural design was also the target of heated debate. Meanwhile, perhaps thanks to their harmony with the surroundings and perfect integration with the architecture, Paulo Werneck's abstract forms, as if blown in with the wind, did not inspire much criticism, even if their composition was hardly familiar at the time.

In 1947, Mário Pedrosa published an article in *Correio da Manhã* in which he weighed the contribution of the activist muralists in Mexico — David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco — to public art. "The Mexican mural project was not technically or aesthetically functional," he wrote. "It was only socially functional. That is where its inveterate regionalism and the non-transposability of its narratives comes from. For its part, true modern muralism is decorative, and this decorative nature is so essential that the most abstract painters and sculptors of our day adapt perfectly to the wall of the modern building. . . ." By this time, Werneck had completed at least nine abstract murals; the Pampulha murals

may well have been the first abstract works of art available to the wider Brazilian public. He went on to create at least 200 additional works, covering virtually the entire country.

The third set of compositions includes work produced from 1946 onwards, such as the designs for Boa Vista Bank in Rio de Janeiro. Werneck's work became more structured, its sharp outlines and a broader palette of colors that become recognizably his — blues, greens, ochres and earthy hues — giving rise to a new visual dynamic that he would continue to use for decades. Lines cross and angles converge to define the colored surfaces; planes overlap or twist, indicating movement and dynamism. Random shapes are bisected by diagonals. He also started to use glass mosaic to attract light and intensify the colors of panels designed for the interiors of buildings with large circulation areas.





Above Ceramic mosaic mural at the Visconde do Rio Claro Building, Rio de Janeiro, 1957; architecture by Paulo Machado.

Below Ceramic mosaic mural at the Boavista Bank, Rio de Janeiro, 1947; architecture by Oscar Niemeyer.

Opposite Ceramic mosaic mural at the Bank of Brazil Recife, 1961; architecture by Rubem de Almeida Serra. The modular mural is approximately 120 feet high.

In 1960, Werneck's work gained a new dimension as he started to incorporate the poetics of Informalism (Latin America's version of Abstract Expressionism), firmly established in Brazil by then. Eschewing clearly defined surfaces, he started to work on non-delineated forms which interacted more subtly, without a clash of planes. Though an organizational structure can be identified, the variety of forms and spaces suggests explosions of colors that take up the whole surface in a multiple, fragmented vision.

Throughout his career as a muralist, Werneck also developed dozens of standard mosaic patterns for large areas on the façades or interior walls of buildings, developing modules that could be multiplied and juxtaposed to form enormous panels. He studied the way they integrated with the architecture in minute detail so that they would never jar or overwhelm, but merely decorate the surface. He mostly drew on elements from plane geometry — circles, squares and triangles — which he combined to produce more complex forms. He favored subtle, delicate colors for building exteriors, stronger ones for interiors. The result was always a balanced composition accompanied by eye-catching optical effects. His murals could be up to 90 feet long, all fully accessible to the public.

And wasn't this his ultimate purpose? Convinced that art was a public asset, Paulo Werneck devoted himself unstintingly to the production of murals to bring art and life into closer contact. Much of his work can still be seen on the walls of buildings in Brazil's cities, drawing the gaze of passersby and refining their perceptions. His compositions, welcome stimuli for our imagination, do not presume to mean anything. They are simply to be enjoyed. They deserve a closer look, not as mere appendages of architecture, but as works in their own right. ■

*Trained as an architect, **Carlos Martins** is an artist, curator and historian of art and culture, based in Rio de Janeiro.*

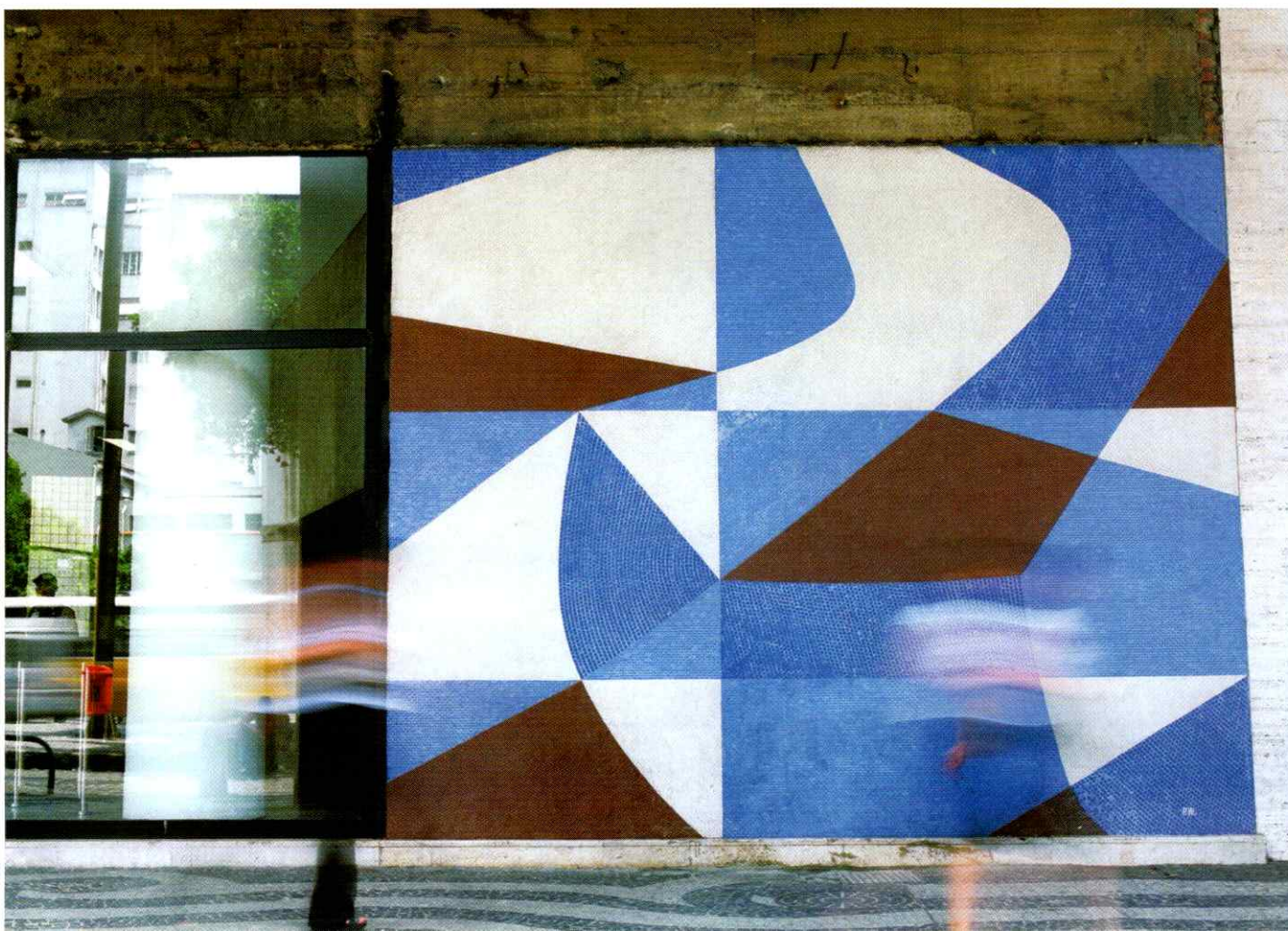




Photo by Vicente de Mello





SERIOUS FUN

Brent Bennett's 50 Years in Clay

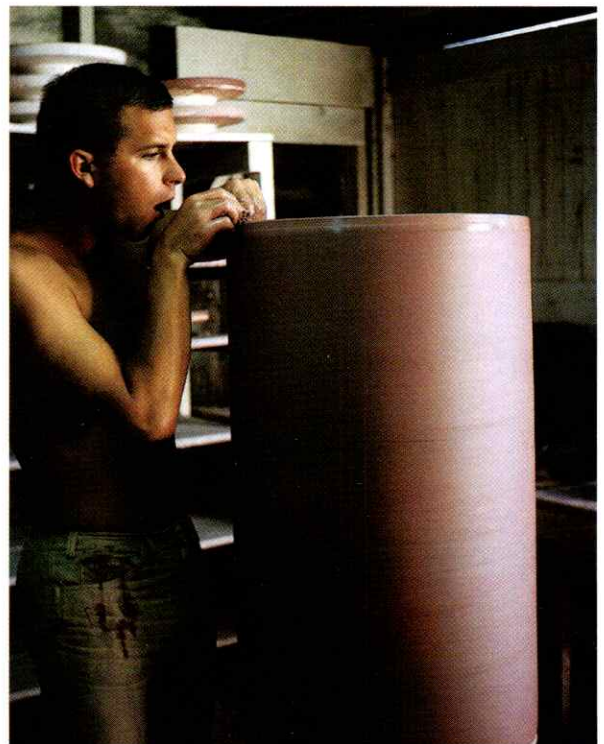
By Peter J. Wolf

There's an expression in the antiques business: "Knowing what you're looking *for* is important, but knowing what you're looking *at* is even more important." Of course, it helps to have inside information. That's how Carey Bennett, daughter of potter Brent Bennett, spotted one of her father's stoneware vases in 2004 at NoHo Modern, a gallery of vintage furnishings then located in North Hollywood, California. Surprised to see the piece attributed to David Cressey, a well-known contemporary of her father's, she set the record straight. Jeremy Petty, co-owner of NoHo Modern, was immediately intrigued. "I said, 'Well, who's your father? I want to meet him! When can I meet him?'" After getting to know Bennett and seeing more of his work, Petty and co-owner Thomas Hayes were inspired. "Both of us really thought his work deserved to be seen," recalls

Opposite Detail of high-relief mural, 2005, in glazed clay and glass. Melting the crushed glass at the same time as firing the clay poses unique challenges. The heated glass "flows like water," says artist Brent Bennett, so the kiln must be perfectly level to keep it in place. Once, says Bennett, he had to unload a kiln full of overflowed, congealed glass with a hammer and chisel.

Top Custom high-relief mural created for an exhibition at the University of California, Los Angeles, 1963.

Right Brent Bennett finishes the largest hand-thrown cylindrical planter he has ever made, c. 1965. It was 36 inches in diameter, 48 inches tall and weighed 400 pounds.





Left, top Garden lantern, 2005.

Left, bottom Patio table, 2005.

Above Wall fountain, 2 x 4 feet, 2009.

Opposite Three-tiered garden lantern, 5 feet tall, 2005.

Petty. What began as a chance encounter set in motion a series of events that led to the largest show ever of Bennett's work, and the end of his retirement.

Bennett's stoneware has an unapologetic, earthy quality. It is less austere than the geometric forms long associated with postwar design in southern California, but no less modern. "I'm the generation after Architectural Pottery," says Bennett, referring to the firm whose iconic planters have become inextricably linked with that region's modernism. "It's clean modern design, but with more detail."

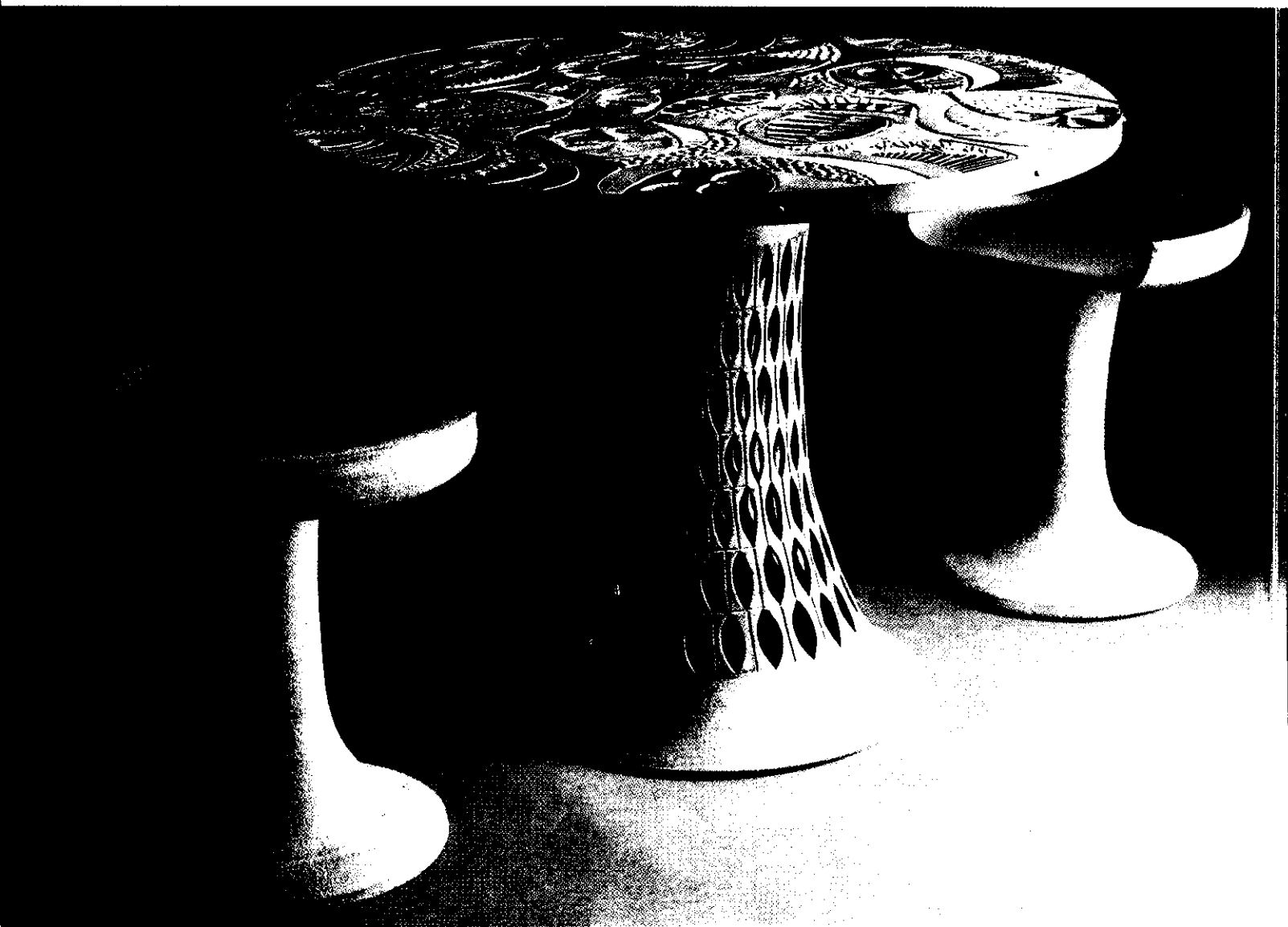
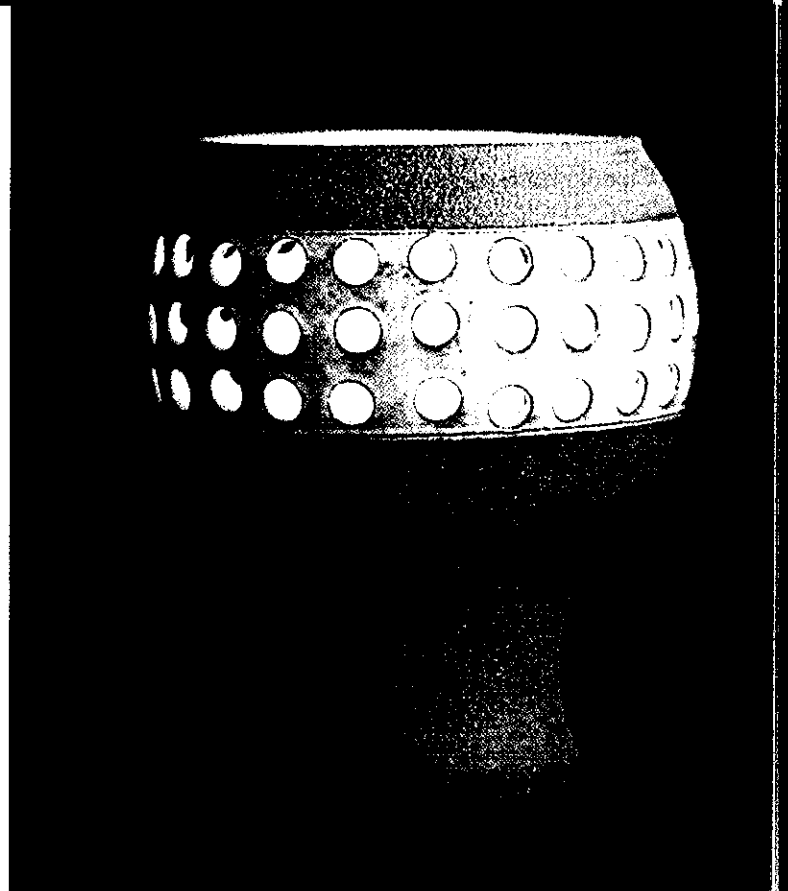
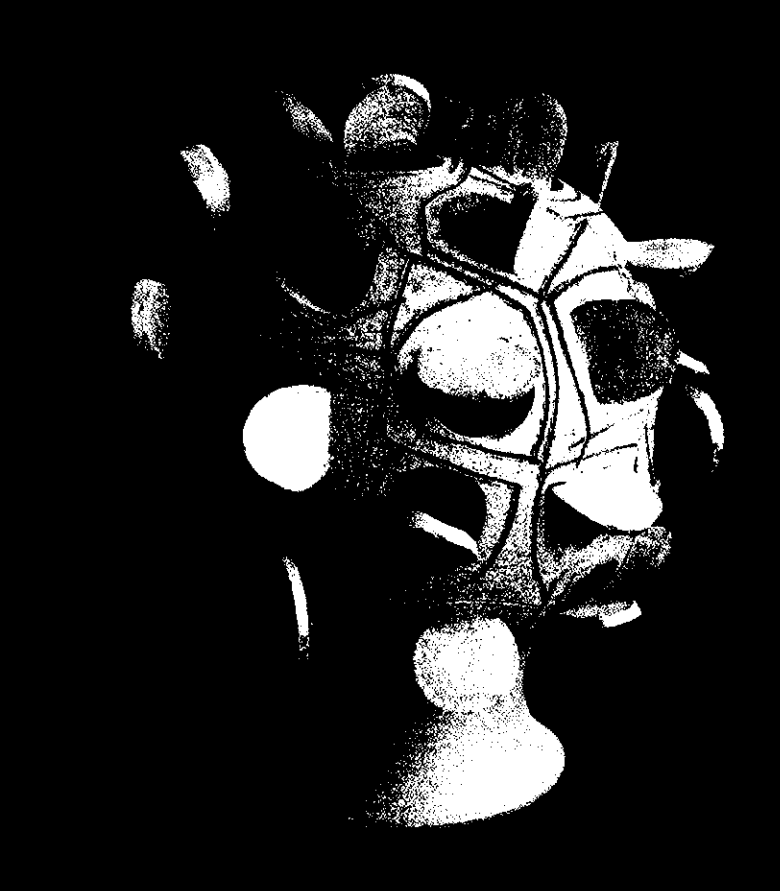
The potter's career has been a roller coaster; he had as much work as he could handle at some points and virtually none at others. He's received commissions from a number of major clients, including Cannell & Chaffin, the prestigious L.A. showroom, Bullock's and J.W. Robinson's department stores, Hilton and Hyatt hotels and several yacht clubs. His tile wall murals — up to 40 feet long — have been installed in banks, shopping centers and a number of corporate headquarters. He has been honored with the Purchase Prize from the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento and an award from the Resources Council, a New York association for interior designers, for one of his garden lantern designs. But Bennett has always been more concerned with working than with winning competitions and accolades. "I give away...or sell the good stuff," he says simply.

Bennett was born in 1940 in Los Angeles to creative parents. His father, an architect and store planner, worked with Raymond Loewy for a period of time, most notably as project architect for the interiors of Robinson's department store in Beverly Hills, and his mother, says Bennett, was "one of the better watercolorists around." Bennett attended Hollywood High School, where he took a ceramics course — and discovered his life's work. He continued training in ceramics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he earned his bachelor's degree in art in 1962. During summer breaks, he worked as a lifeguard, but after meeting the renowned potter Raul Coronel (1926–) in 1958, Bennett gave up the sand and sun for clay and kilns. "He was a fantastic swimmer," recalls Coronel. "I saw his arms, and I thought, 'Well, he'll make big pots — he'll make very good pots.'" Coronel was not disappointed. "When I started with Raul," says Bennett, "I was doing whatever needed to be done: hand work, kiln stacking and unloading, glazing, press molding. I started throwing a year later on a piecework basis and it developed from there."

Although Bennett was influenced by his mentor's design sensibilities, it was Coronel's creative process that left an indelible impression on him. "It was just a continual flow of ideas," says Bennett. "He pushed your imagination as to what you could do with clay: 'What can you do with this stuff? What can you design with it?'"

In 1961, Bennett spent the summer at the famous Pond Farm Pottery in Guerneville, California, headed by Marguerite Friedländer-Wildenhain (1896–1985), a Bauhaus-trained potter. "All summer long you made pots to her specifications of 13 or 14 shapes," he remembers. "You threw them, and then at the end of the day, you'd wedge it all up again — and then you threw them all again the next day, until you could do it. And I think I kept one pot out of the whole summer." If Coronel taught Bennett about creative freedom and the unlimited potential of clay, it was Friedländer-Wildenhain who taught him discipline. "The discipline *allows* you the freedom," says Bennett. "You have discipline so that when you do something, you can do it the first time out."





After earning his master's degree in 1964 from the University of California, Los Angeles, Bennett, along with Coronel and graphic designer Walter Schneider, formed Stoneware Designs. Bennett is quick to credit Coronel for their early success. "Raul was the primary designer," he says. Together, the three created a variety of stoneware designs, including planters, sand urns, murals, lamps, custom tiles and ashtrays, sold through design showrooms and galleries, as well as their studio. The focus was largely on functional pieces, however modest. "That's when ashtrays were big," Bennett recalls with a smile. "We'd make 80 ashtrays a day and sell every one of them. We couldn't make them fast enough!"

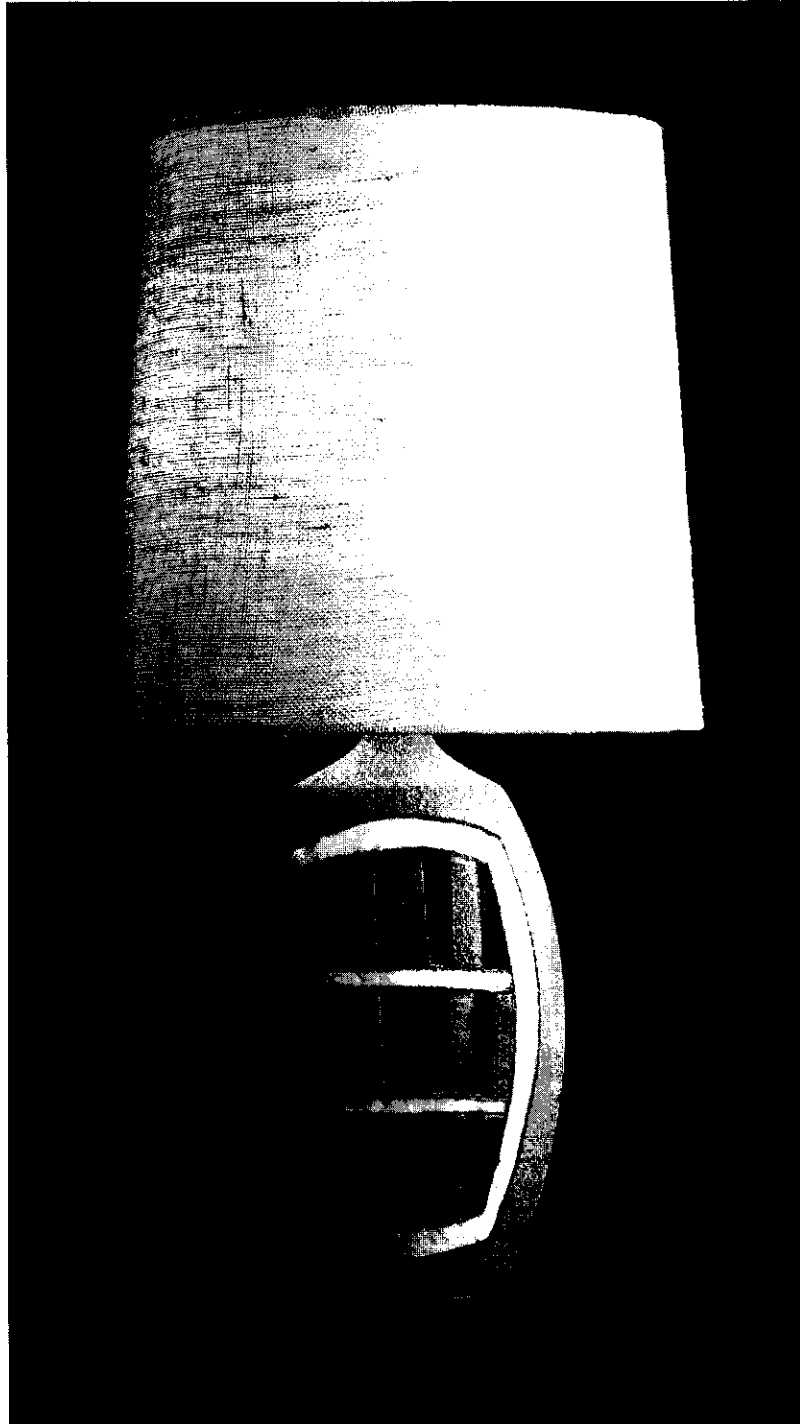
Bennett left Stoneware Designs in 1968, to work as a field representative for an insurance company. Although the move limited his time in the studio, it provided Bennett with the necessary business skills to open his own studio, Architectural Stoneware, just two years later. Among the first to show an interest in Bennett's new venture was Charles Freiden, who owned a major lighting showroom, the Charles Company; he purchased many lamp bases from Bennett. "That started Architectural Stoneware on its course," says Bennett. "He was taking everything I was making." It was Freiden, says Bennett, who "got me back into it."

Bennett relocated Architectural Stoneware a number of times to different facilities around southern California, each time outgrowing what had previously seemed like spacious quarters. It was an inevitable problem, given the scale and volume of his work. For many of his large planters — including some 36 inches in diameter — Bennett used a "jigger machine," in which a paddle is used to press soft clay into a spinning mold. Nearly everything else was hand-thrown. It wasn't unusual, he says, for him to use four tons of clay each month.

During the late 1980s, Bennett, like so many others, was hurt by the economic recession. "About 1990, the thing just died — the building industry died," he says. "We sold the business off to somebody out of Mexico, and they picked up everything, lock, stock, and barrel, and took it all down to Mexico." That was the end of Bennett's first career, but serendipity, plus the technical command that never leaves the hands of a talented ceramist, would lead him to the second career he enjoys today.

Bennett's expertise with clay allows him to work quickly and freely, giving his work a playful and direct quality. "For me," he says, "throwing clay is a very quick medium...to get something you have visualized. I'm not the best draftsman," he jokes, "but I have in mind where I'm going from the start." Bennett's emphasis on efficiency allows him to spend more time getting his hands dirty, but it also gives his work a raw, direct quality. "There is something of the cave painter in his roots," writes Damon Cardwell, co-owner of Cardwell Jimmerson Contemporary Art, in Culver City, California. But, adds Cardwell, in his introduction for the catalogue accompanying Bennett's 2005 exhibition, "Brent consistently turns the cave inside out and warms the walls with his fertile vision."

For Bennett, this quality is something inherent in the material itself. "I like to warm things up," he says, "and that's what clay really can do." In his wall murals, Bennett emphasizes this characteristic by using complementary materials. Made up of what he calls "little slabs," the murals juxtapose raw, unglazed stoneware with



Above LB8 pierced table lamp, 1970. It was Bennett's extensive line of lamp designs that helped launch his company, Architectural Stoneware, in 1970.

Opposite, clockwise from top left GL2 garden lantern, 1970; TL2 lamp, 1971; Patio table and chair set, c. 1972.



earth-tone glazes and brightly colored glass "windows." The glass, fired along with the clay and glazes, serves as a counterpoint with its smooth texture, transparency and bright colors.

In July 2005, the exhibition "Brent Bennett: The Nature of Clay: 1958-2005" opened at NoHo Modern, re-launching a career begun nearly 50 years earlier. The show featured several vintage Bennett works, some of which had been boxed up in a warehouse since the 1960s and "discovered" by gallery owners Jeremy Petty and Thomas Hayes, as well as recent pieces made expressly for the exhibit. Petty says their goal was to celebrate Bennett's work as more than pottery. "These guys — veteran ceramists — have a tradition of being craftsmen and potters, but I don't think they consider themselves artists as much," says Petty. "Brent had never had an exhibition in the way that we did it for him, in a way that really showcased his work and showed it off as this beautiful art."

Bennett could not have been more pleased. "I took a hiatus from this for about 10 years and then started going back at it again," he says. "And everybody liked it, and I'm right back where I started." "We sold a ton of his work," says Petty, "and there's a whole new audience that discovered it." But more important than the sales, he says, is the exposure the exhibition brought Bennett. "It's nice to see him have a greater presence again." Coronel, his old mentor and colleague from Stoneware Designs, who attended the opening night, is also glad to see Bennett in the spotlight. "This is a talent yet to be recognized," he says, with both admiration and affection.

Bennett is delighted to be working again and more delighted than ever with what he's making. "Not to be boastful, but I think some of my best work is coming through right now, because I'm not tied down to having to make something that's for sale," he says. "I still think of it as for sale, always, because you've got to live. [But] it's taken the handcuffs off me — I can do whatever I want... It's more fun now." ■

Peter J. Wolf is a lecturer in design history and qualitative research at the School of Design Innovation at Arizona State University. He is working on a visual collection of graphic design terminology for Rockport Publishers.

Left, top Vase, 20 inches tall, 1969. Many artisans are critical of "throwing the same thing over and over and over again," says Bennett. "To me, time is very important — clay is dirt-cheap. A certain amount of efficiency is necessary... It got me where I could throw to exacting dimensions — and you had to if you were throwing sets of things. When I think of something, I can throw it the first time out — I don't have to do several tries to get it."

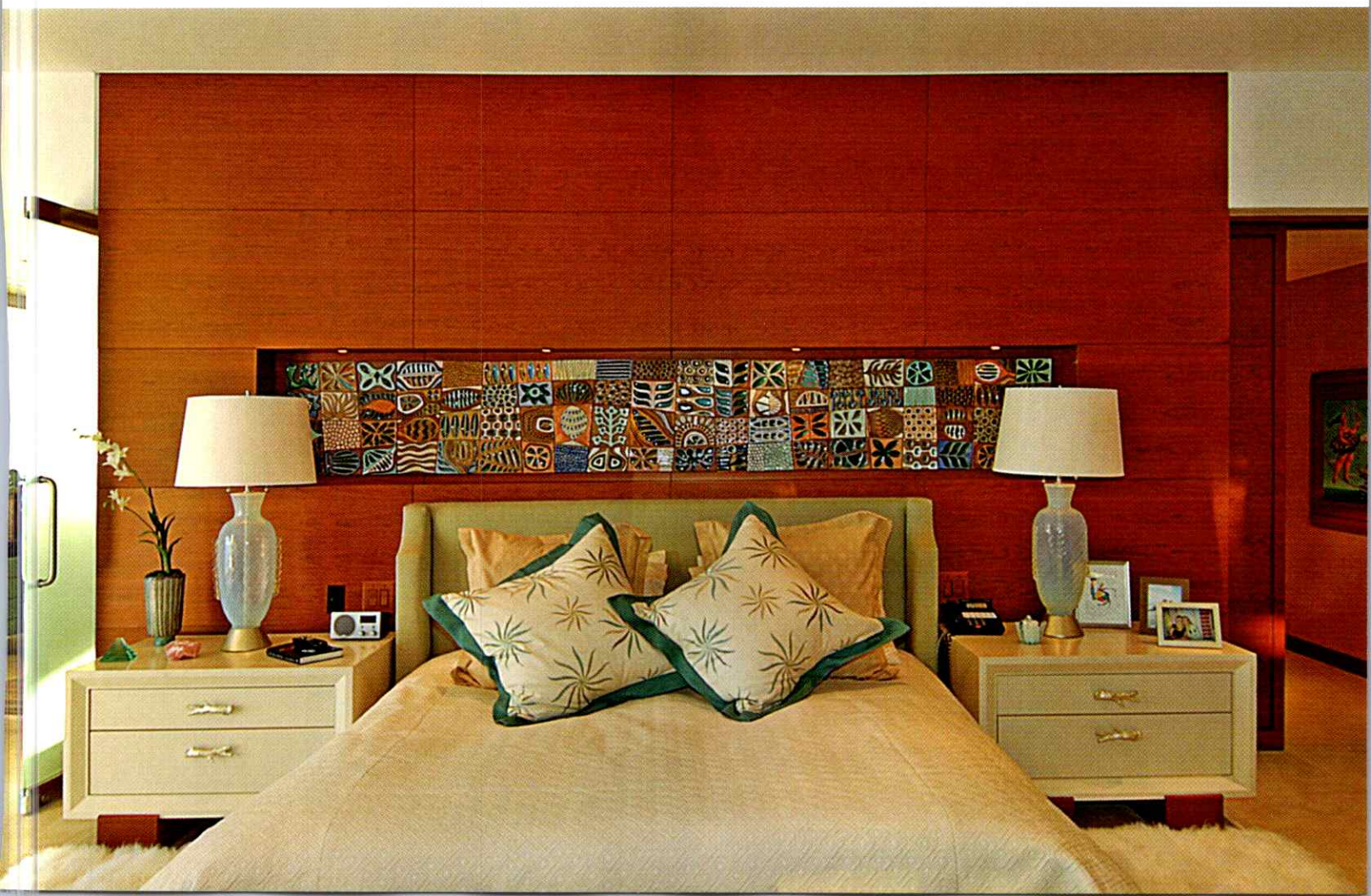
Left, bottom LB54 vase, stoneware with ochre and white glazes, wax-resist design, c. 1971.



Above Brent Bennett (center) with former Stoneware Designs partners Raul Coronel (left) and Walter Schneider (right) at the opening of "Brent Bennett: The Nature of Clay: 1958-2005."

Right Bird panel (one of three designs), unglazed and glazed stoneware with crushed glass, burlap-covered board with walnut frame, c. 1970.

Below Custom tile wall mural in an abstract seascape design, 12 x 2 feet, 2004. Malibu, California.



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Set of four J.L. Moller rosewood armchairs, Denmark, c.1965.



Chanel

brooch
poured glass
c. 1982

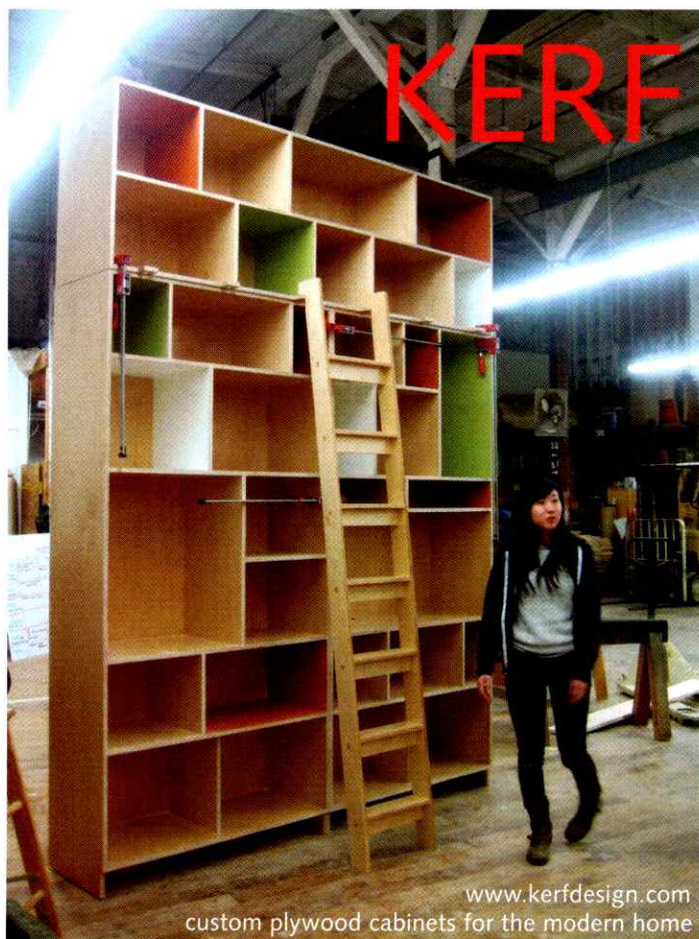


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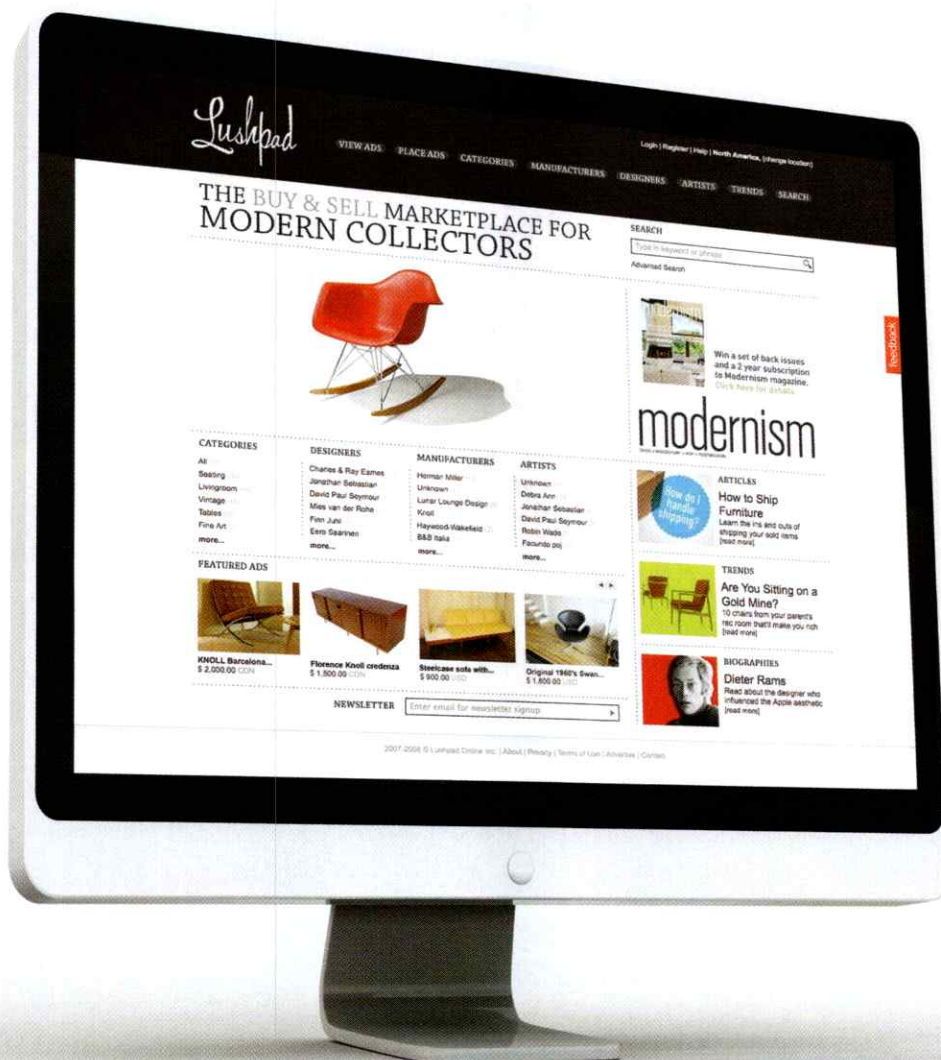
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SPACES

Tropical Modernism on a **BRAZILIAN ISLAND**

By Gaspar Saldanha
Photography by Antonio Caetano



In 1962, when I was six years old, my family decided to move from Rio de Janeiro to the tropical island of Paqueta, an island with the solitude of Fire Island and the charm of Gilligan's Island, nestled an hour away by boat in Guanabara Bay. Marcelo Roberto, one of Brazil's great modernist architects, had designed our new family home in 1959 as a gift for my mother, artist Regina Werneck. Along with his two brothers, Milton and Maurício, Roberto formed the renowned architecture firm MMM Roberto in Rio. They were part of the young group of architects who, along with Oscar Niemeyer and Le Corbusier, defined Brazilian modernism.

Situated on one of Paqueta's 14 beaches, looking across the bay to the Serra dos Órgãos mountain range, the house was revolutionary for its time. I remember childhood friends joking that our house was a "wooden box," since most of the homes on the island were built in the 1930s or '40s in the neocolonial style. The entire façade is made of modular

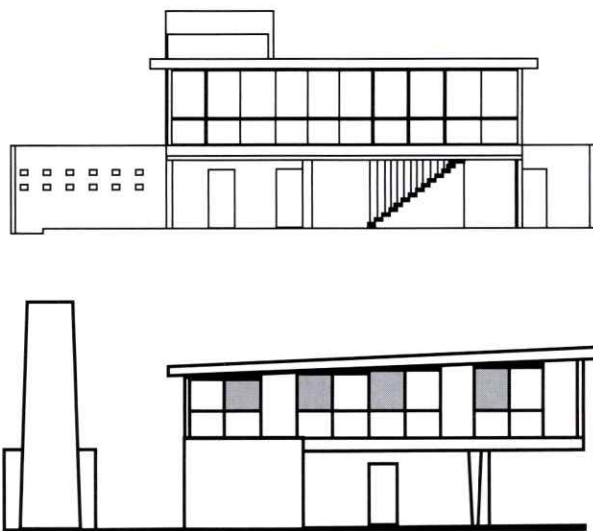
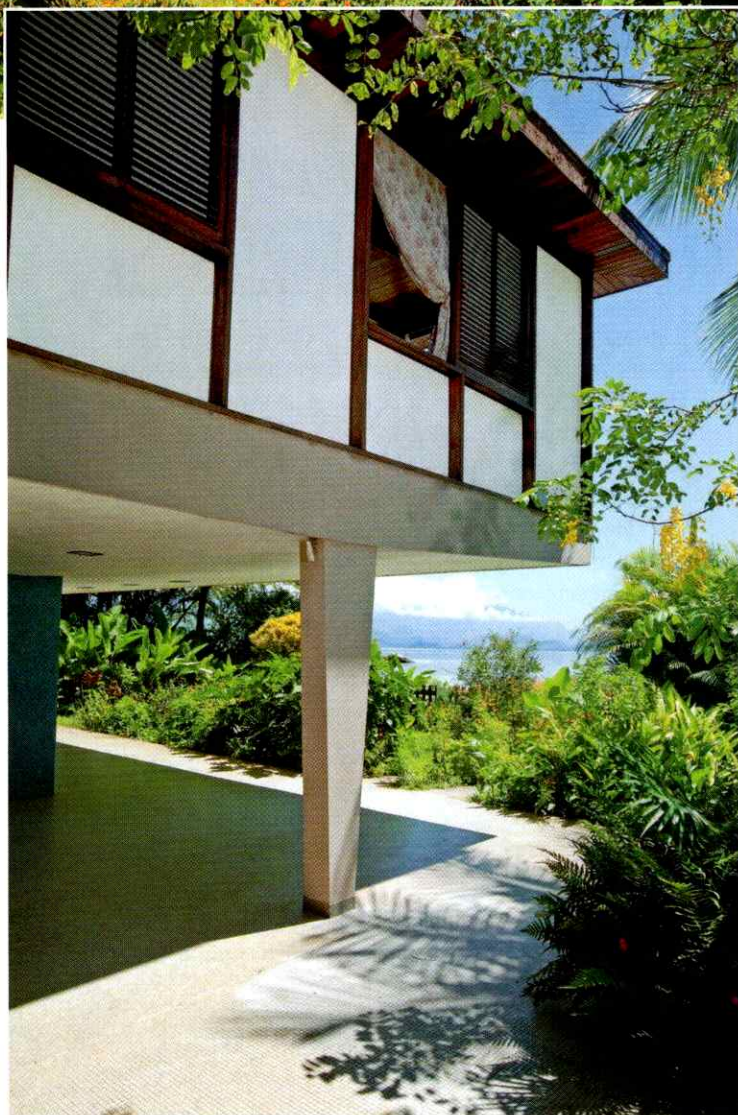
panels of white Formica, framed by Peroba wood. The structure incorporated hollow chambers in the floors to allow for lighter weight and fewer structural supports, engineering techniques previously unknown to the local builders; while half the two-story house rested on traditional structural walls, the second level living area, studio and master bedroom, supported only by two *pilotis*, cantilevered out to shade the patio underneath. When the day came for the removal of the scaffolding, none of the workers would do it; they were afraid that the house would fall down, so my father, Aristides Saldanha, and some friends had to take it on.

The house became a true labor of love to which many relatives and friends contributed: a friend of my father donated special Balsamo redwood from his farm in the Amazon; my German uncle supplied newly developed paints that he produced (the first waterproof paints in Brazil); my mother designed and silkscreened decorative

Opposite Modernist architect Roberto Marcelo designed a home on the Brazilian island of Paqueta for author Gaspar Saldanha's mother, artist Regina Werneck, in 1959. It is framed in indigenous Peroba wood with prefabricated Formica panels.

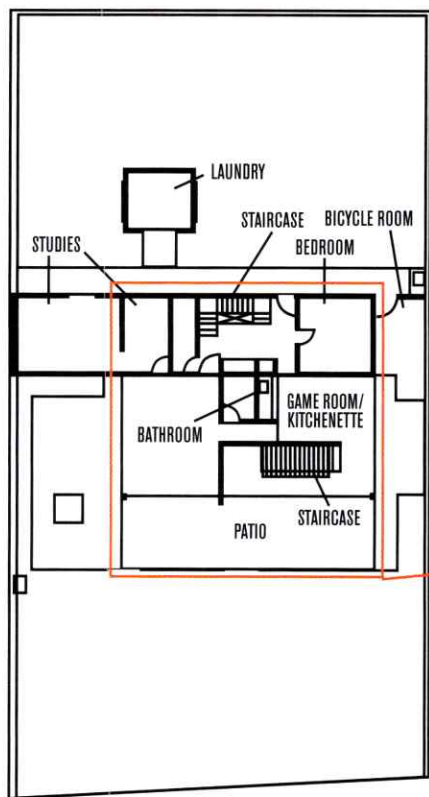
Above Gaspar Saldanha with his family, c. 1967, in front of their house on Paqueta. From left, his younger sister, Claudia; his father, Aristides Saldanha; his mother, Regina Werneck and his older sister, Paula, standing. The fence and gate were designed by his grandfather, artist Paulo Werneck, using indigenous wood from the island.

Top Panoramic view from the front of the house showing the tranquil waters of Guanabara Bay and the Serra dos Órgãos mountains beyond.

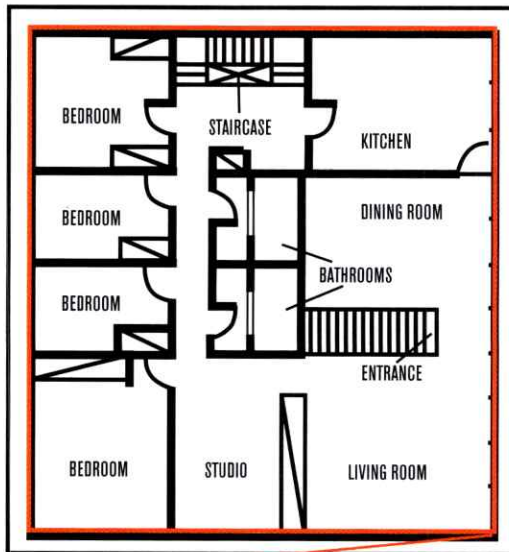


Beatriz Santos de Oliveira, Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

Top, left and above The cantilevered front half of the second floor is supported by two slender *pilotis*, creating a shaded patio below. A staircase, suspended from metal rods and decorated with a mosaic mural by Paulo Werneck, leads to the second floor entrance.



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

Beatriz Santos de Oliveira, Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

Above The floor plans, along with detailed measurements and photographic research, were executed as part of the research project *Brazilian Houses in the 20th Century*, coordinated by Beatriz Santos de Oliveira, associate professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, with the participation of graduate architecture students.

Below The furniture in the master bedroom was designed by Paulo Werneck; the fabrics with tropical motifs were designed by the house's current owner, Gaspar Saldanha.



tiles for the bathrooms and kitchen. She also hand painted a full set of dinnerware, each plate decorated with a fish like the ones that my sisters and I used to catch nearby, and the family portraits that she painted soon adorned the walls. In the end, we all had brushes in our hands, helping to paint the walls and ceilings.

It was my grandfather, Paulo Werneck, however, a warm and gregarious man, who took command of the project. A gifted artist, muralist and craftsman, he was the one who conceived the details that, combined with its modernist style, make the house so special. My grandfather had worked for Marcelo Roberto and, being the closest of friends, they shared similar aesthetic views. Roberto, in fact, is credited with propelling my grandfather's career into mosaic murals. [See article, p. 34.] I couldn't wait for the weekends my grandfather would spend with us, eager to find out what project would be next. I remember being mesmerized by the way his ideas came to fruition from paper to product. His technical drawings were exquisite.

He designed the whole interior of the house: the built-in furniture that blends in with its simple, clean lines; a tall stained-glass

window; and a large freestanding bookcase that serves as a floating wall to separate the living room from my mother's studio. On one side of the bookcase is a decorative element that incorporates a portrait that my mother painted of me and my sisters, Paula and Claudia. On the other side is a utilitarian storage unit for her flat files and art supplies. My grandfather also designed the exterior landscaping and produced one of his finest mosaic murals for the house. Bordering the shaded patio underneath the house and facing the beach, it has pleasing blue tones that mirror the water; it blends the aesthetic of decorative art with the function of a durable and protective exterior.

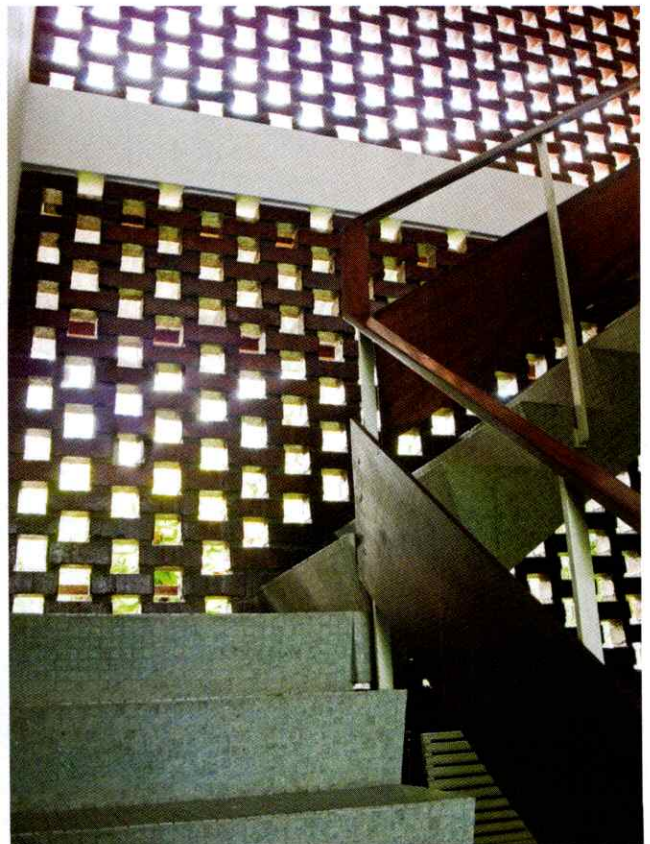
Another brilliant detail was his design for the house's fence, its cement base pierced with pieces of the long thin trunks of Pau do Mangue, a marshland tree indigenous to the island and used by local fishermen to build weirs in shallow water for holding fish; this tree is now protected and harvesting it is outlawed — as is the weir fishing tradition, which catches too many fish at once.

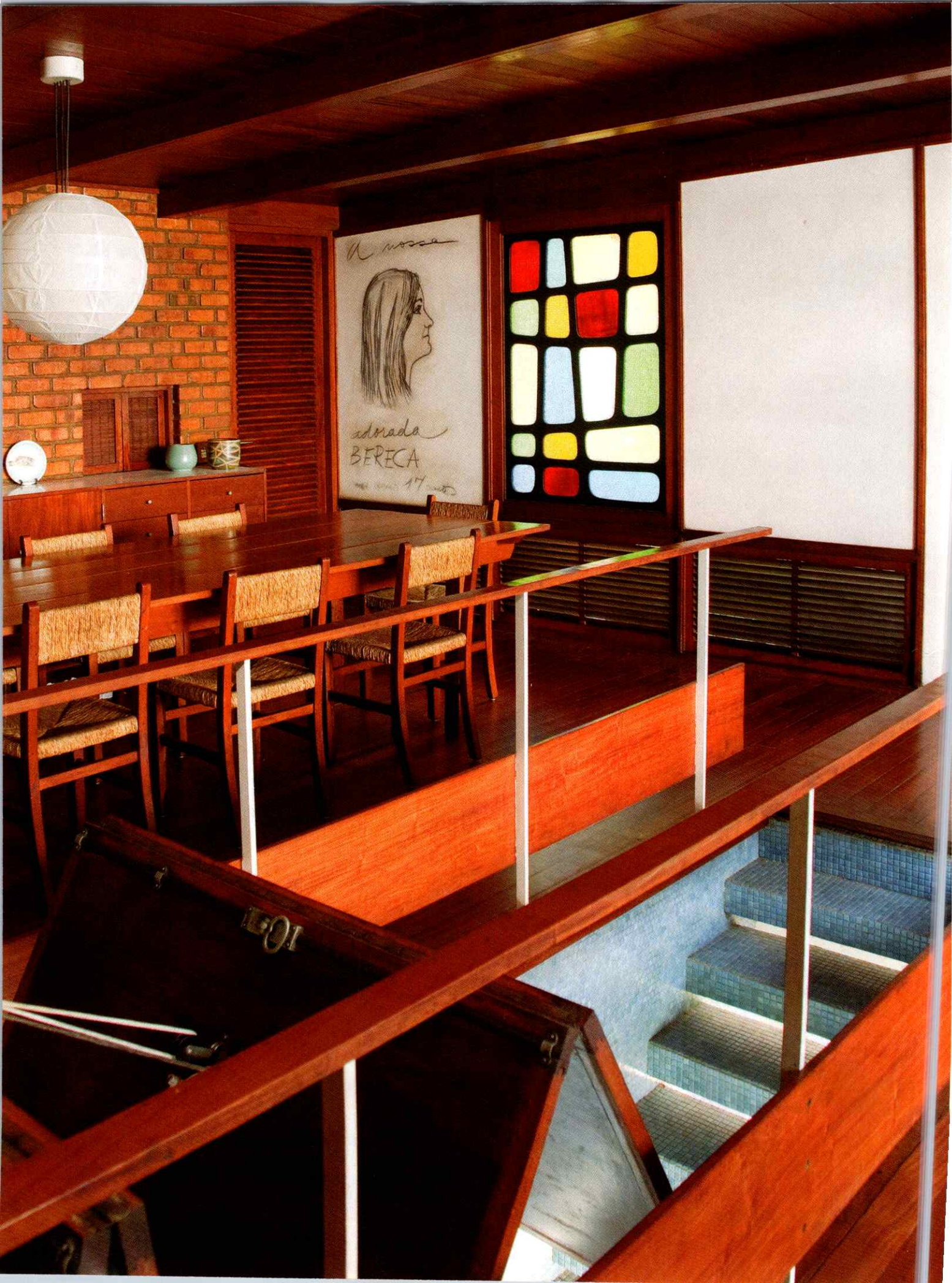
After we moved into the house, we discovered that pioneering architecture can bring unexpected problems. Access to the house

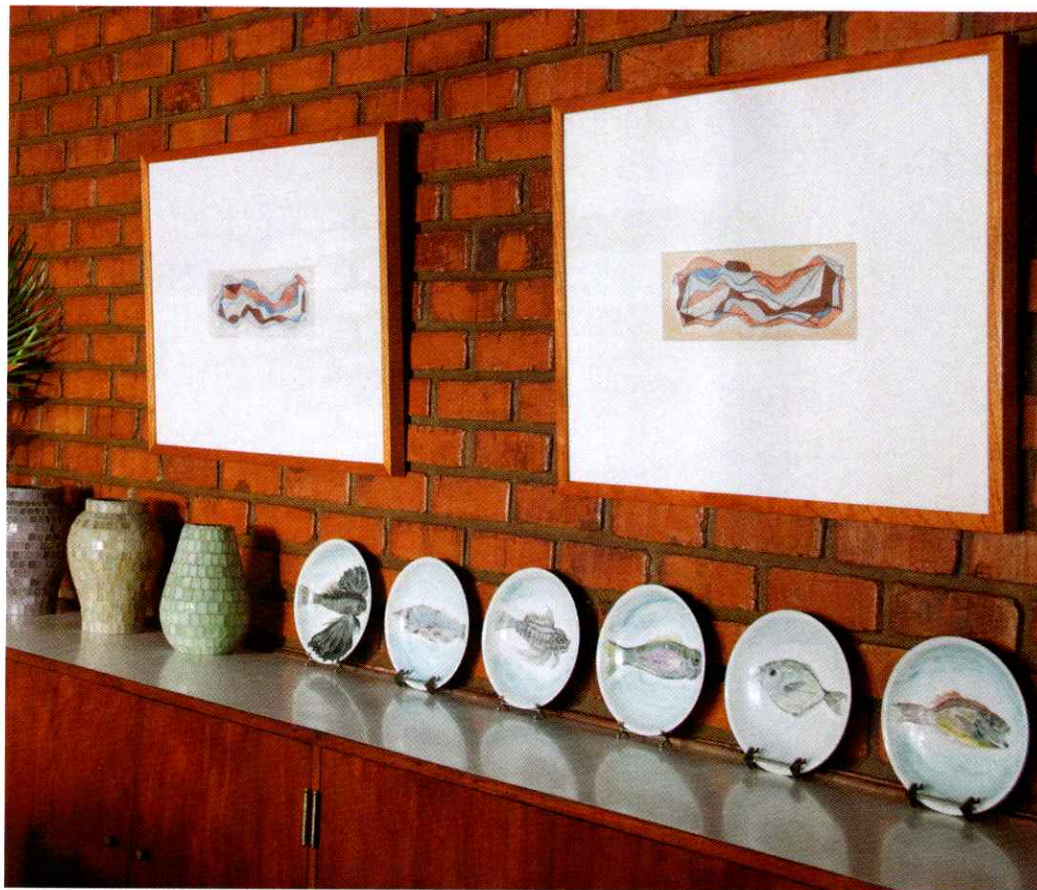
Opposite Regina Werneck designed and silkscreened the tiles in the downstairs kitchenette, top, and guest bathroom, bottom left. The open brickwork flanking the stairs to the kitchen at the back of the house was one of the design's several natural ventilation systems.

Below The outdoor furniture, by an unknown designer, has been at the house since its completion in 1960. The fabrics were designed by Gaspar Saldanha.









Opposite The main entrance to the house is via a suspended staircase rising from the patio and decorated in mosaic by Paulo Werneck, who also designed the trap door, that closes to keep the strong sea breezes at bay, and the wood and stained-glass window that sets off his sketch of his granddaughter, Paula Saldanha, at age 17. The Werneck-designed dining table was crafted of Peroba wood. Small doors above the credenza open into the kitchen. Wooden louvers help cool the house.

Left Mosaic vases by Paulo Werneck and handpainted dinnerware by Regina Werneck depicting local fish decorate the built-in credenza of Peroba wood and Formica. On the wall are gouache sketches by Paulo Werneck for mosaic murals.

Below Paulo Werneck designed the living room furniture (with the exception of the chairs), including the mosaic-topped tables and the bookshelf, which serves to divide the living room from Regina Werneck's studio. The portraits of the Saldanha children are by Regina Werneck.







is via a suspended staircase that rises from the ground-floor covered patio through a rectangular opening in the floor between the second-level living and dining areas. However, the strong winds from the bay would rush up into the house. My grandfather solved the problem with a trapdoor in the floor that worked with a simple mechanism of ropes and hinges similar to a nautical gangway. As children, my sisters and I delighted in opening and closing it; the trapdoor became the home's prized feature in our eyes.

One of the key issues in modernist Brazilian architecture was providing buildings with natural ventilation in the hot and humid climate. Therefore, the house design incorporates both fixed and operable wood louvers — a Portuguese colonial influence — in the doors and windows and even some walls. In addition, open brickwork was used on some exterior walls at the back of the house. We like to say that the house is “naturally air conditioned.”

It was surrounded by all this creative energy that I began my career as a fabric designer. When I was 16 years old, my mother had studios built near the house, one each for my sisters and me. My sister Paula used hers as a music studio for her piano and guitar practice and studio art; she now produces and hosts television programs focusing on the environment. Claudia worked on ceramics; she is now an art curator and director of the School of Visual Arts in Rio. In my studio, I designed and produced jewelry and accessories, and then, turning to fabric design, I began silkscreening and producing designs directly influenced by the island's tropical flora. Thirty years later, these designs, which are used in the master bedroom's bed coverings and curtains and on the outdoor furniture, are still being produced.

Although we moved back to the city after six years, our home on Paqueta was where we spent weekends and long vacations. As the family grew, rooms got switched around, but with five bedrooms and four bathrooms and a card room, the house allowed for many gatherings and extended stays, which continue today. Even though my mother still lives and paints there, I have inherited the house, perhaps because, of all the children, I used it most for



Opposite Looking down the entrance staircase, showing Paulo Werneck's mosaic wall.

Top The abstract mosaic in blues and white reflects the color of the sea directly in front and provides an additional sense of coolness to the patio, shaded by the second floor, where the family posed for a photograph (inset) c. 1967. Additional living spaces on the ground floor are behind the wall.

my work and inspiration. Lately the house has also hosted special events and, since it was granted historic landmark status in 2001, a plan is in the works to transform it into the Instituto Paulo e Regina Werneck. It will house much of the work of both artists, father and daughter.

Gaspar Saldanha is a Brazilian designer living in New York City. He has worked in all areas of apparel and home furnishings, designing under his own label and consulting for brands such as Kenneth Cole and Joseph Abboud. He currently designs and produces a line of upholstery fabrics, printed in Brazil.

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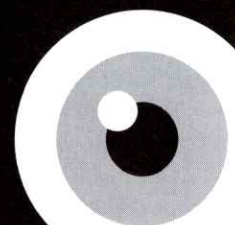


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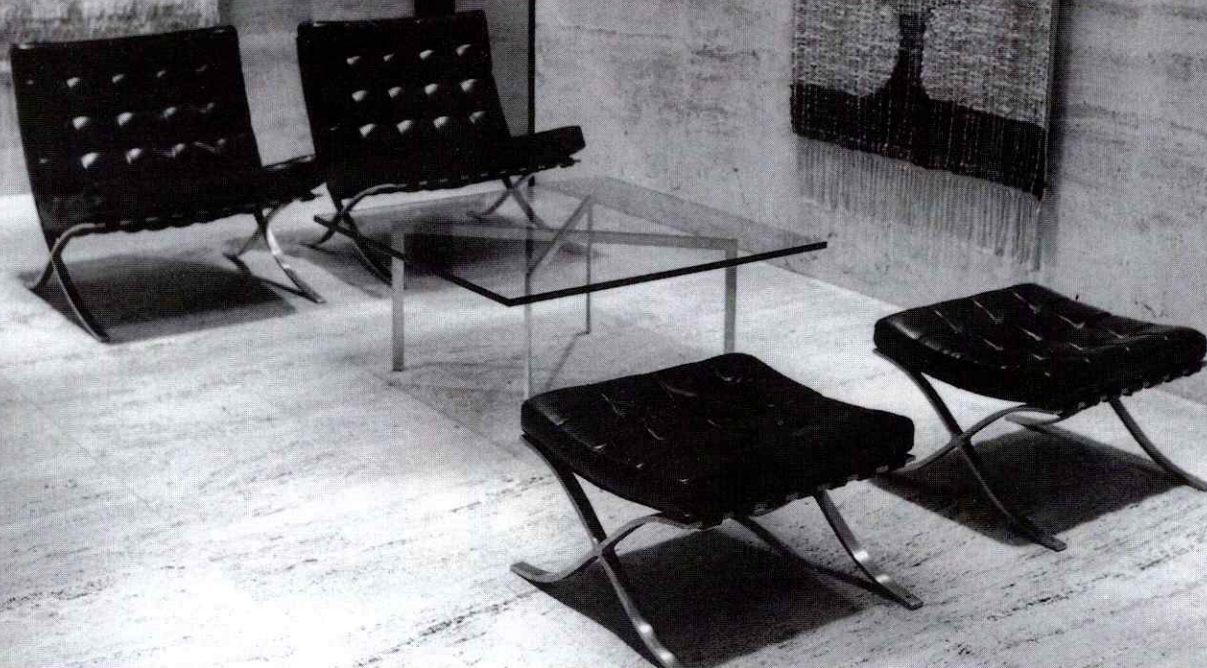
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Courtesy of Gratz Industries.

GRATZ INDUSTRIES The Great Unknown

By Sandy McLendon



In the cluttered workshop of Gratz Industries in Long Island City, New York, a hulking old machine broods amid sheets of plywood, piles of metal rods, bins of springs and pulleys, a phalanx of industrial sewing machines and a sign that warns "No Goggles, No Work." Its name, emblazoned on its battleship grey flank, is "DoAll." This sums up neatly the creative, can-do philosophy that has earned this metal fabricator its enduring reputation as the "go to" company for industrial design greats like Donald Deskey and Raymond Loewy and, later, for detail-oriented architects and designers like Mies van der Rohe, whose famed *Barcelona* chair achieved its designer's impossible vision for its legs at Gratz: two perfect shining arabesques flowing through each other like water or air.

Gratz manufactured the metal frames for this midcentury modernist classic for many years — including those that still stand in the Four Seasons restaurant at Mies's Seagram Building — as well as the architect's *Brno* and *Tugendhat* chair frames, all three for Knoll (the *Barcelona* and *Brno* are now fabricated for Knoll in Italy; Gratz still makes the *Tugendhat*). They also made Noguchi's *Rocking* stool and designs by Le Corbusier and the Eameses. More recently, designers like Massimo and Lella Vignelli and Richard Meier have brought their designs to Gratz for prototyping and fabrication, and the small company — today it has 20 employees — has also made

many of the large scale sculptures seen in public plazas and major museums for artists like Noguchi, Sol LeWitt, Robert Rauschenberg, Donald Judd, Barnett Newman, Forrest Myers and Walter de Maria. But despite this heady list of clients, the company's name is largely unknown since, like that of a ghost writer, it rarely appears on its products.

Originally known as Treitel-Gratz, Gratz Industries was founded by Frank Gratz, a structural engineer trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Edward Treitel in 1929, in the midst of the Art Deco and Streamline Moderne era. They were well located on 32nd Street in Manhattan, where a new breed of industrial designers like Deskey and Loewy was taking metal design to new heights, aesthetically and structurally. "They were the 'smart' metal guys," says David Rosencrans, managing partner and president, and a designer himself, who joined the company almost four years ago. "Frank was a brilliant engineer. People could come with ideas and he could figure out how to make them — the metallurgy, the alloys. He did structural engineering in metal." That technical mastery was supported by the old world skills of Gratz's first employees: metal artisans from Austria, Czechoslovakia and Bavaria. Then, as today, rather than mass production, the company focused on what it did better than others: developing concepts and prototypes for architects and designers and machining parts. Among their early projects were metal elements for Radio City Music Hall for Deskey and prototypes for Loewy, including his pink rolling tea cart, used for serving refreshments at the Lord & Taylor department store, and his iconic Coca-Cola dispenser. The company also supplied the military with chairs and aircraft consoles in the 1930s and '40s. In the 1950s and '60s, Gratz manufactured the designs of William Katavolos, Ross Littell and Douglas Kelley, under the name Laverne Furniture. When that company ceased operations in the late 1960s, Gratz produced the designs under its own name until the 1970s.

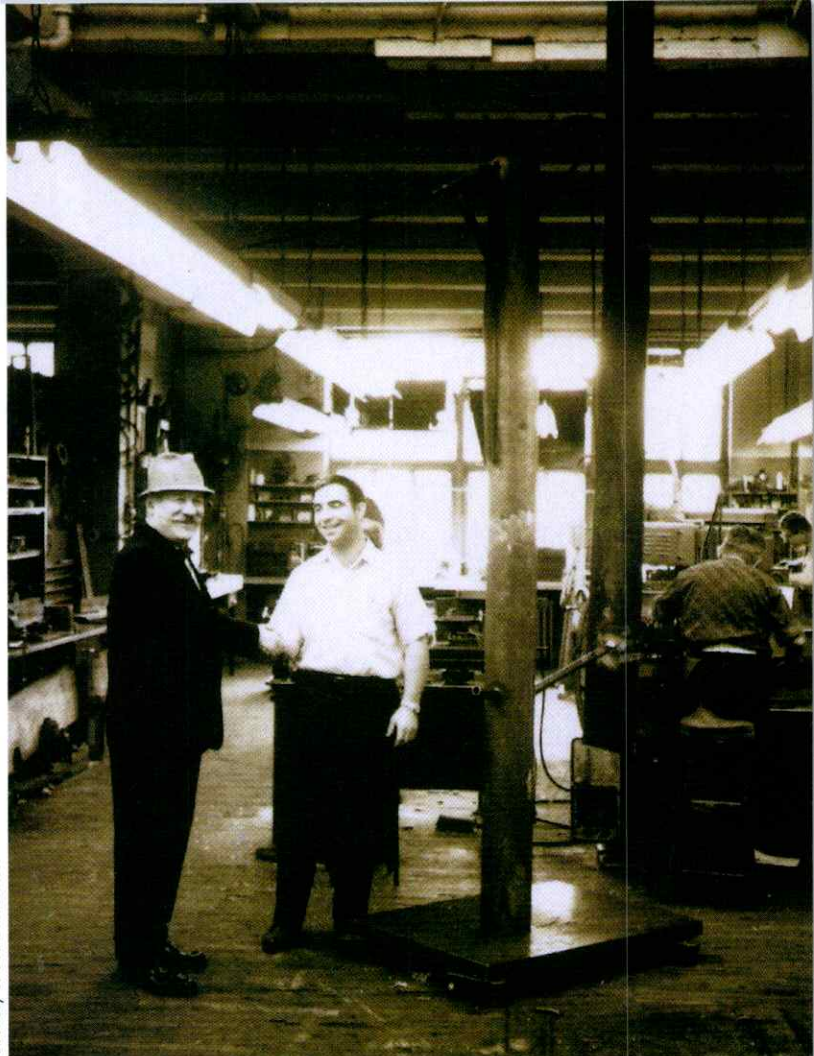
There were other metal shops to choose from, but Gratz developed a reputation for figuring out how to bring the most barely conceived ideas to fruition. The company became known for being able to "take a drawing from the back of a napkin and run with it," says Rosencrans, "and offer options in engineering, materials, fabrication techniques

Opposite, top Treitel-Gratz fabricated Mies van der Rohe's *Barcelona* lounge chairs and ottomans and the glass and steel table for the Four Seasons restaurant in Mies's Seagram Building, 1959.

Opposite, bottom Treitel-Gratz produced Mies's *Tugendhat* chair, designed in 1929, for many years for Knoll. Gratz Industries now produces the chair under the Gratz Archive Collection.

Right, top Donald Gratz, right, and artist Barnett Newman in the Treitel-Gratz workshop during fabrication of Newman's sculpture *Here 111*, 1966.

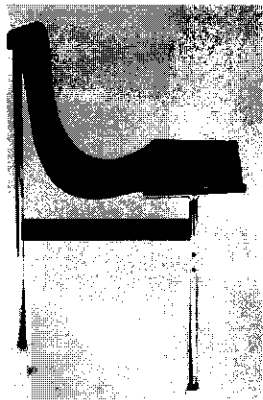
Right, bottom Prototype of Raymond Loewy's famous beverage dispenser, c. 1942.



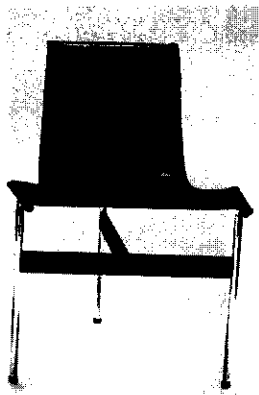
Courtesy of Gratz Industries.



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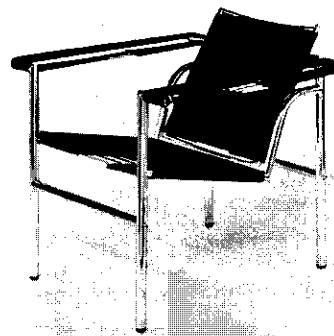
TG-10 Side Chair
31 1/2" H x 22" W x 22" D
Seat Height 18"
Chrome Legs — Black Tee
Black or Tan Leather



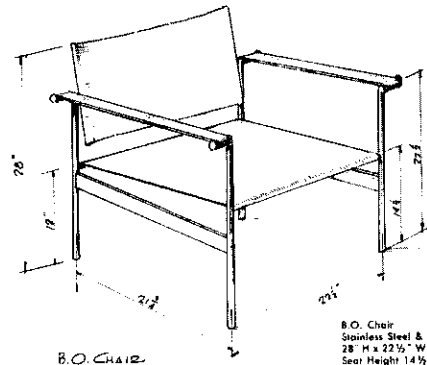
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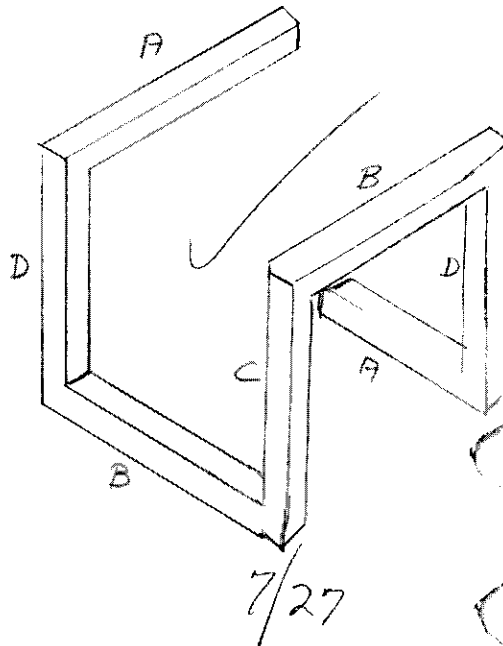
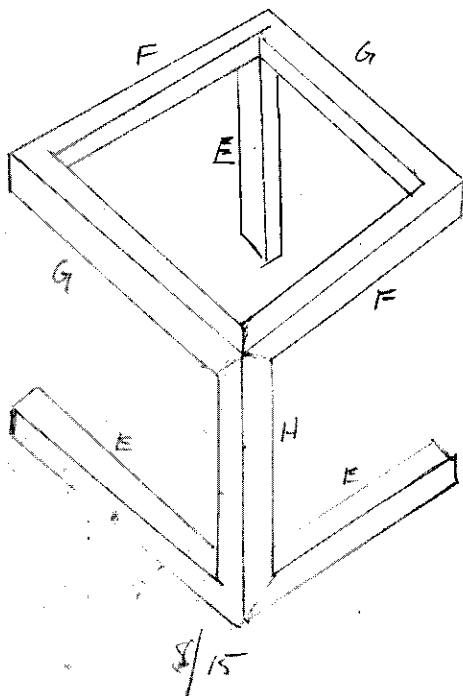
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Black Canvas
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17" W Inside Arms



B.O. Chair
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Sol Lewitt

Above Treitel-Gratz product line sheets, c. 1962, showing the TG-10 side chair, designed by William Katavolos, Ross Littell and Douglas Kelley for Laverne Furniture, left, and the Le Corbusier *Sling* chair, right.

Left Diagrammatic drawing by artist Sol LeWitt of a sculpture for fabrication by Treitel-Gratz, 1975.

and aesthetic considerations that the designers may not have considered and that other metal shops will not or cannot take the time to penetrate and finesse." Such expertise could also lead them to turn a designer down. In the 1950s, Frank Lloyd Wright came to Gratz for a chair for the Guggenheim Museum. Frank Gratz told Wright the design wouldn't work and, never one to be intimidated by fame, shrugged off the architect's ire. "Frank Gratz was no shrinking violet," says Rosencrans.

Frank Gratz had an able heir in his son, Donald, born in 1934, who joined the company straight out of college in 1955; he ran it from 1972 until his death in 2003. The younger Gratz learned about the business from his father and from Harold Treitel, the company's salesman. Donald Gratz excelled at finding the most accurate and powerful way to express a designer's intent, and this quality, as well as his deep knowledge of metals and their properties, garnered the trust of modern artists and designers like Maya Lin, whose 1994 *Eclipsed Time* steel and aluminum clock for New York's Pennsylvania Station was made by the company. The famous "button and needle" sculpture (1996), designed by James Biber of Pentagram Architects for New York's Fashion Center Information Kiosk on Seventh Avenue, is a Gratz fabrication as well, and the company is still called upon by museums and artists' estates to repair sculptures they made years ago. Gratz Industries's work with Noguchi included prototype frames for his Akari lamps, his *Trinity* and *Two Equals One* sculptures and his massive *Detroit Pylon*, a 120-foot-high stainless steel sculpture. While Noguchi also used other fabricators, his relationship with Gratz Industries was long-lasting and warm; Roberta Brandes Gratz, Donald's widow, remembers, "Donald would drop *everything* when Isamu walked into the shop." In appreciation, Noguchi presented the Gratzes with a sculpted self-portrait in Cor-Ten steel.

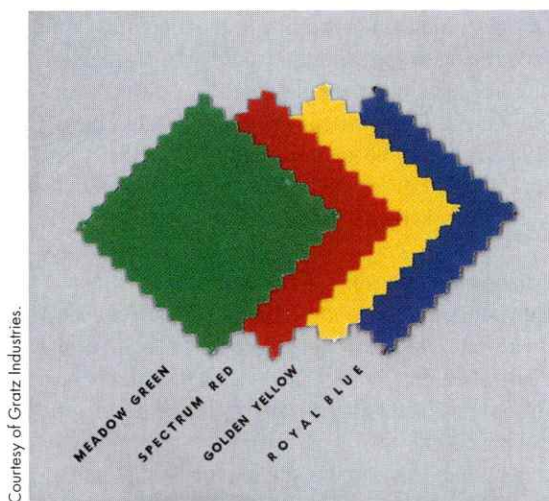
Since Donald Gratz's death, Roberta Gratz and Rosencrans have worked hard to maintain the company's enviable reputation for innovation and excellence. Rare today, Gratz is a union shop, as it has been since its founding in a more populist era. In some ways, this works in its favor in New York City, enabling



Courtesy of Gratz Industries.

Above Promotional photo for the Le Corbusier *Sling* chair, c. 1960.

Below Treitel-Gratz promotional brochure for the *Aluma-Stack* chair, designed by Jack Heaney, 1950.



Courtesy of Gratz Industries.

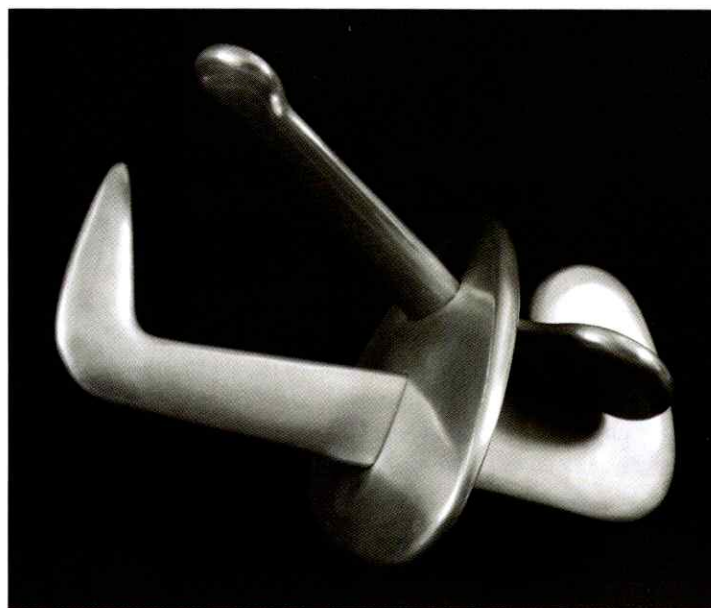
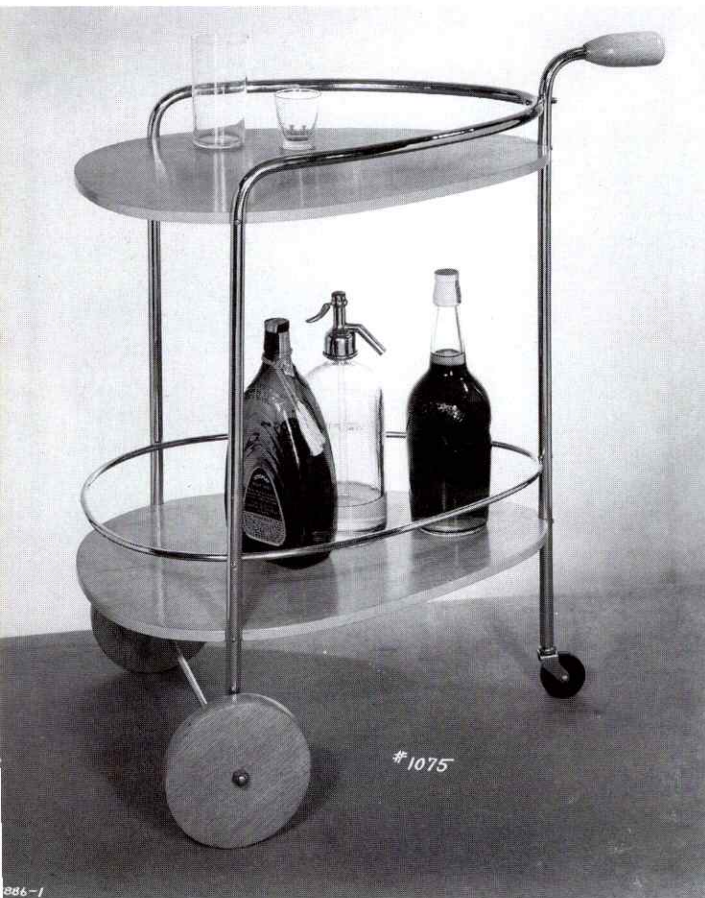
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STYLE No. 802

TREITEL - GRATZ
ALUMA-STACK CHAIR
DESIGNED BY JACK HEANEY





Above Isamu Noguchi, *The Seed*, sculpture in aluminum, fabricated by Treitel-Gratz in 1946.

Left, top Beverage cart designed by Treitel-Gratz, c. 1949.

Left, bottom Isamu Noguchi, *Rocking stool*, 1960, in chromed steel with wood seat and base. Treitel-Gratz prototyped and fabricated the stool.

Opposite, top Recreation by Gratz Industries of Edward Durell Stone's 1964 brass-disc auditorium ceiling, 2008, at the Museum of Arts and Design (formerly the "Lollipop" building) at Columbus Circle in New York City.

Opposite, bottom Treitel-Gratz fabricated the Raymond Loewy-designed globe in 1950 for the lobby of the Lever Brothers Building, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A Treitel-Gratz worker puts on finishing touches, left; promotional photograph, right.



it to work on projects like the 15-by-15-foot stainless steel and glass sculpture of the Bank of America logo, which hangs in the lobby of One Bryant Park. But competition from offshore manufacturing has made the cost of union labor for most production prohibitively expensive, so the shop focuses on prototyping except for art projects and one-off pieces, like a glass and metal-rod wall feature that Rosencrans designed for the Thompson LES Hotel in lower Manhattan recently or the reproduction of the swooping suspended ceiling of gold-anodized aluminum discs for the auditorium at 2 Columbus Circle, originally designed by Edward Durell Stone, now extensively remodeled as the home of the Museum of Arts and Design. It does have a quirky financial mainstay, however: Gratz is one of the principal manufacturers of Pilates exercise equipment. The only company to have worked with Joseph Pilates, founder of the exercise program that bears his name, Gratz has sold the precisely crafted steel-and-wood apparatus all over the world since the 1960s.

The company recently renewed its relationship with William Katavolos and is again producing historic Laverne designs, such as the leather sling T chair from 1952 (now called the TG-10), under its own Gratz Archive brand. Gratz Archive also offers new Katavolos pieces based on Laverne designs that were never produced.

Designers and architects like Diane Lewis still rely on Gratz's perfectionist ethic. Lewis, an architect who formerly worked with Richard Meier

Photo by Kevin Noble.

Photo by Kevin Noble.

Courtesy of Gratz Industries.

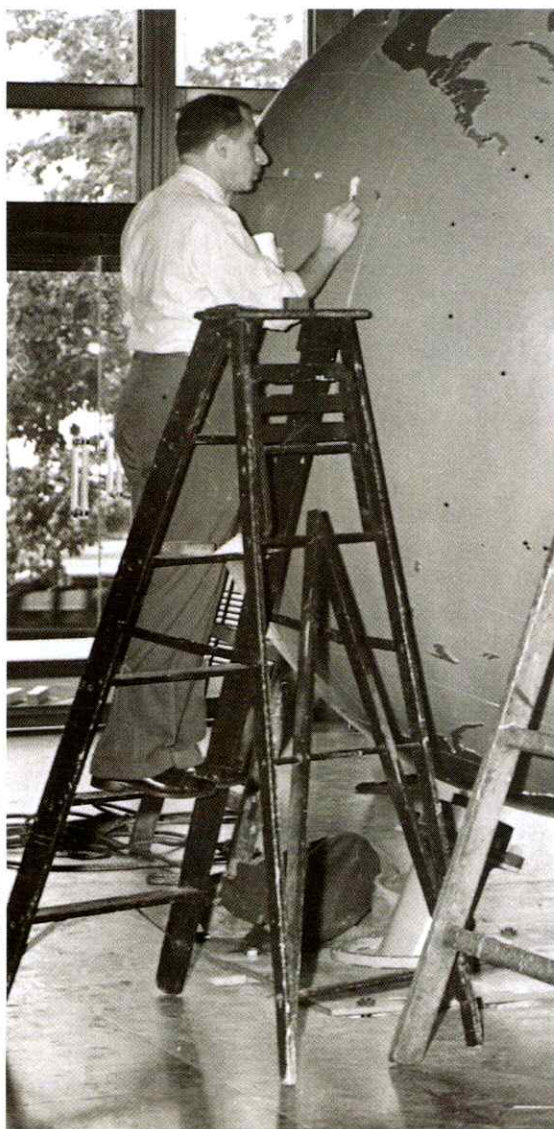
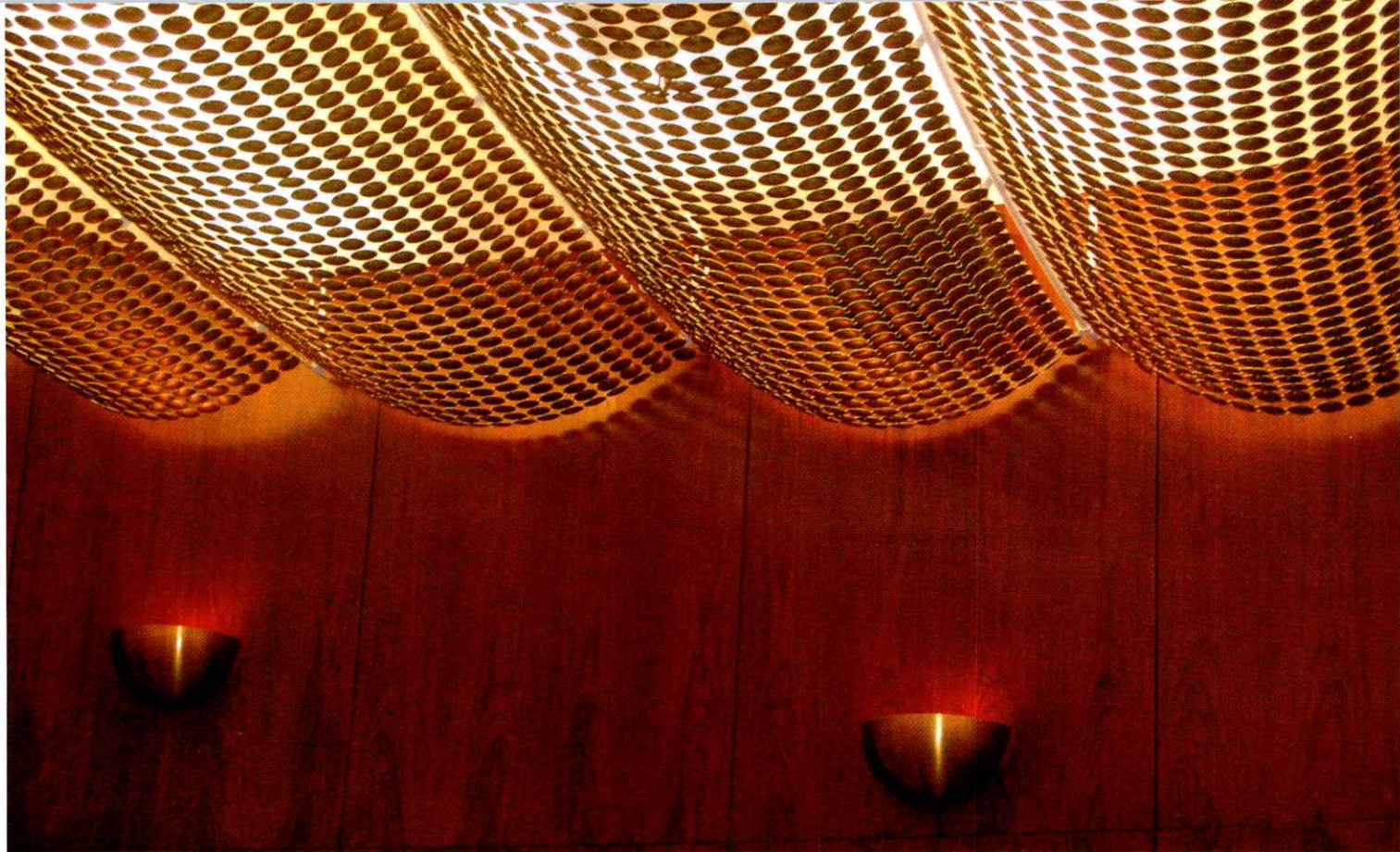




Photo: Rob Wilson.



Courtesy of Gratz Industries.

Above Maya Lin, *Eclipsed Time*, 1994, Pennsylvania Station, MTA Long Island Rail Road. Ceiling mounted timepiece in sandblasted glass, aluminum and fiber optics. Commissioned and owned by Metropolitan Transportation Authority Arts for Transit. Fabricated by Treitel-Gratz.

Left Gratz Industries employees work on a prototype of a chair by Eva Zeisel, 2009.

and I.M. Pei and has been principal of her own firm, Diane Lewis Architect, since 1982, describes her 25 years of working with Gratz as a "Renaissance relationship." She sees the company as the modern-day equivalent of a craft guild, whose arcane, yet practical, knowledge of metals and their fabrication frees designers to create instead of worrying about how something can be made. "They go the extra mile with crazy, interesting details," she says. The shop succeeds by relying on the old ways, cutting, bending and polishing metal with World War II-era milling machines and lathes, making every piece by hand.

On a recent Friday, Junior Adams, metal cutter at Gratz for 24 years and originally from the island of St. Vincent, was working in the dusty mid-afternoon light that streamed through the high windows. Adams came

to the company as a 20 year old, fresh from doing automotive body work, and was trained by Donald Gratz. "He was a professional," he says reverentially. "He could estimate how much material to order. There was no waste. He paid a lot of attention. He was a very thoughtful, intelligent guy."

Adams might well have been speaking of the company as a whole: paying attention, thoughtful, intelligent — it's what generations of great designers and artists have appreciated about this small, old-fashioned shop. Gratz Industries may never be a household name, but to those who depend on it, its services are irreplaceable. ■

Right Gratz Industries fabricated the "button and needle" sculpture at the Fashion Center Information Kiosk, designed by James Biber of Pentagram Architects, at 39th Street and 7th Avenue in New York City in 1996.

Below David Rosencrans of Gratz industries designed this blown-glass and aluminum feature wall in 2008 for the Thompson LES Hotel in New York, commissioned by Dodd Mitchell Design of Los Angeles. The glass vessels were made by Nouvel Glass Studio in Mexico City and the attachment system engineered by TriPyramid Structures of Westford, Mass.



Photo courtesy of Pentagram Design.

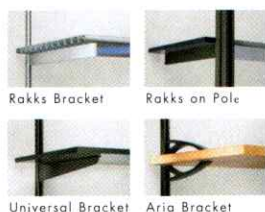


Photo by David Rosencrans.



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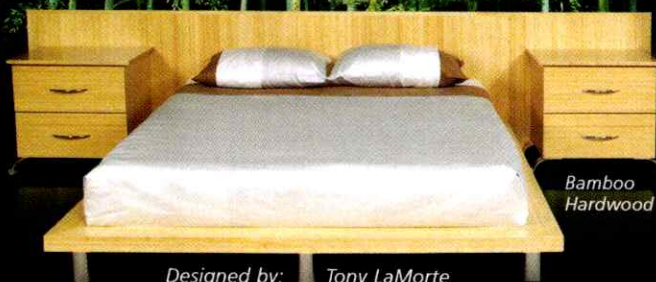
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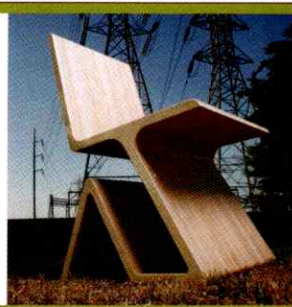
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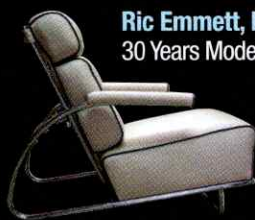
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AARHUS

Danish Capital of Functionalism

By Majken S. Eliassen

Photo by Jens Lindhe, courtesy Aarhus City Hall

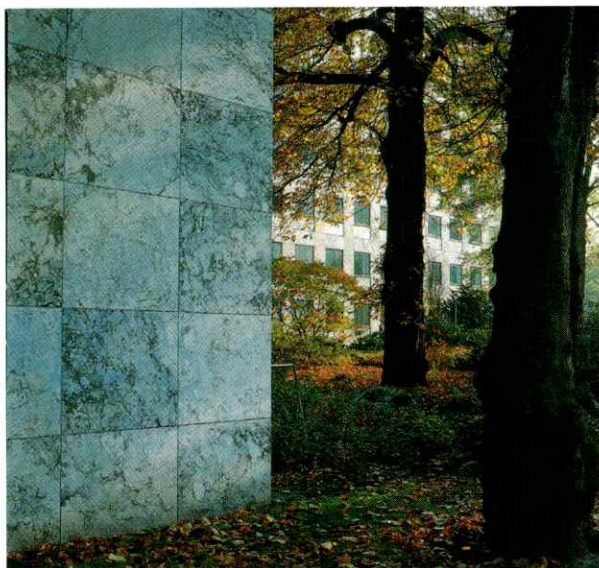


Photo by Jens Lindhe, courtesy Aarhus City Hall

The 20th century in Denmark produced some of the world's most celebrated and popular modern designs, like Arne Jacobsen's *Egg* and *Swan* chairs. Less well known is the country's modernist architecture. During the 1920s, European modernist movements, especially Germany's Bauhaus school and Le Corbusier's streamlined modernism, inspired the development of a uniquely Danish functionalism. There may be no better place to view some of its finest examples than the seaside city of Aarhus, located on the east coast of the Jutland Peninsula, three to four hours by car, ferry or train from Copenhagen.

Now the second largest city in Denmark, with 239,000 inhabitants, Aarhus was a small town until 1850; it grew rapidly with industrialization at the turn

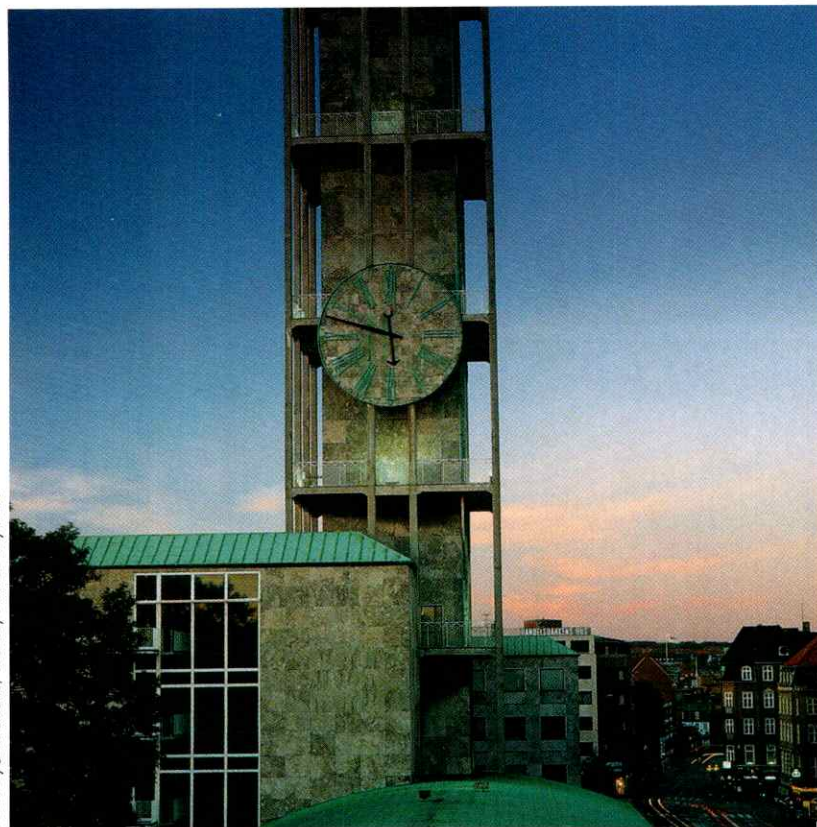
Above The impressive entry lobby of Aarhus City Hall measures more than 10,000 square feet. In keeping with functionalist principles, the ceiling structure and cruciform columns were left apparent, although made appealing with a smooth finish and softened edges.

Left The city hall's architects hoped to use cement on the exterior, in keeping with European modernist ideals, but public demand for a more refined material led to the use of Porsgrunn marble.

of the century. By the early 1930s, the population had reached almost 100,000 and the city needed to build public institutions to accommodate its growth. This period corresponded with the advent in Denmark of a new functionalist style. The first example appears in Arne Jacobsen's drawing of the "House of the Future" in 1929 (never built); by the 1930s, the most important Danish architects had embraced functionalism. Thus, the many building projects undertaken in Aarhus during this period resulted in an unusual visual harmony in that city. Aarhus's city hall, university, public baths, hospitals and apartment buildings are regarded today as groundbreaking masterpieces of Danish functionalism and the University of Aarhus and Aarhus City Hall are both officially listed among the 12 most significant examples of Danish architecture in Denmark today.

Many of the earliest European modernist architects — that is, those outside Scandinavia — had a vision that reached beyond aesthetics towards the social aim of bettering life for those who lived or worked in their buildings. They believed in designing from the inside out, rather than allowing the exterior to determine the arrangement of the interior: everything should have a practical function, all useless decoration should be stripped away, roofs should be flat and the structure's lines clean. The new apartment blocks of 1920s France and Germany served as models for how to build light-filled and spacious homes for the working class at low cost. This building style dominated the 1925 World's Fair in Paris and later the Stockholm Exhibition of arts and crafts in 1930. It was here that Danish architects, including Jacobsen and Poul Henningsen, truly discovered the functionalist way of thinking. The exhibition's organizers, Swedish architects Sigurd Lewerentz and Gunnar Asplund, had designed and built several modernist structures of white-painted concrete

Photo by Jens Lindhe, courtesy Aarhus City Hall.



Above To placate the public's desire for grandeur, and in keeping with a tradition in Danish city halls, a clock tower was added to the design.

Below The city council members sit at tables arrayed in an ellipse, an arrangement inspired by Danish poet Piet Hein's concept for the perfect environment for a meeting.



Photo by Jens Lindhe, courtesy Aarhus City Hall.

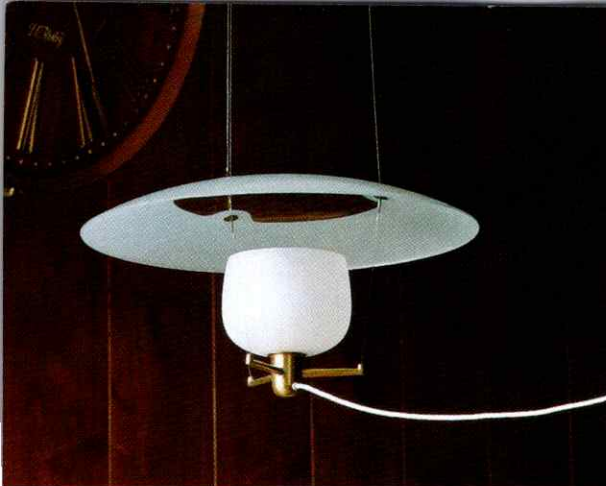


Photo by Jens Lindhe, courtesy Aarhus City Hall.



Photo by Jens Lindhe, courtesy Aarhus City Hall.

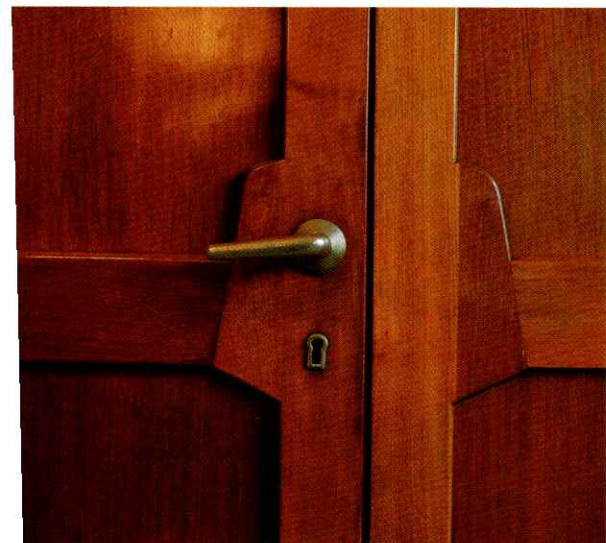


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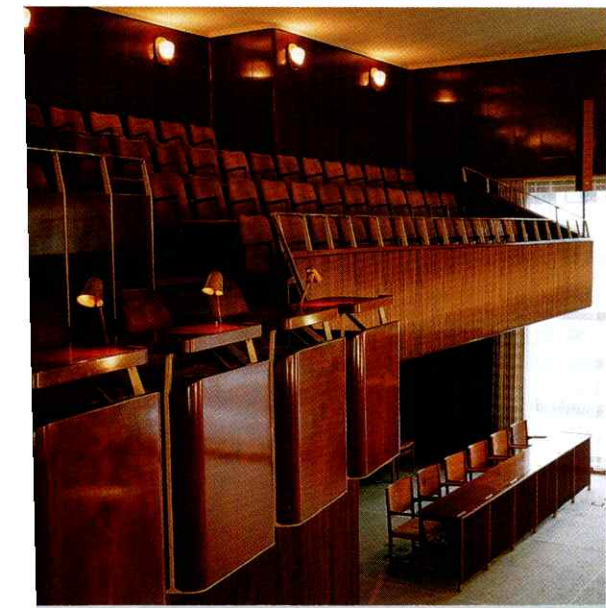


Photo by Jens Lindhe, courtesy Aarhus City Hall.

with large windows of glass and steel to introduce visitors to the style. The fair's Paradise Café and entry pavilion were also admired for their use of steel and glass.

Like their French and German counterparts, Danish architects such as Jacobsen and Hans Ove Christensen embraced functionalism as a social program capable of providing inexpensive, good-quality housing to a broad population, especially to the growing working class, as the country moved from a rural society to an industrial one. Concurrently, the Social Democrat party, which came into power in 1929 and remained until 1940, took the needs of the working class seriously.

The ideas of Danish functionalism were initially disseminated through the journal *Critical Review*. Published only from 1926 to 1928, its opinions had a huge influence in the arts community throughout the 1930s, not least on architecture. Its editor-in-chief was none other than Poul Henningsen, widely known outside of Denmark for his lighting designs, such as the classic *PH* lamps, but in Denmark he was equally known as a cultural journalist and social critic. *Critical Review* focused on four areas:

Left, top to bottom No detail was considered too small for the team of Danish functionalists who designed the city hall: architects Erik Møller and Arne Jacobsen, with furniture designer Hans Wegner. Jacobsen designed every lamp and the font for signage (this says "fire hose"). The team also designed the doorhandles and keyholes; and the furniture, including this balcony seating in the council meeting room.

Places to Visit in Aarhus

Spanien Public Baths (1933)

Spanien 3-7
Designed by Frederik Draiby (restored in 1944), the public baths mix functionalism and Art Deco, the latter a rare style in Denmark.

Aagaarden Apartment Complex (1933)

Åboulevarden 82-84
Reminiscent of Vienna's Karl-Marx Hof, Aagaarden was Hans Ove Christensen's first attempt to create a modernist apartment project, an approach he perfected three years later in Klintegaarden.

Aarhus County Hospital (1935)

Nørrebrogade 44
A functionalist building in red brick by Kay Fisker and C. F. Møller, similar to their design for Aarhus University.

Aarhus Regional Hospital (1935)

Tage Hansens Gade 2
Designed by Axel Høegh-Hansen, the building embodies a transition from neo-classicism, the dominant style in the beginning of the century, to functionalism.

Strandparken (1935-38)

Strandparken 1-44
Designed by Alfred Mogensen, Strandparken is one of Denmark's earliest examples of a functionalist building complex, with attention to light and space. The pastel colored plaster façades point towards European modernism.

Attached Houses at Marselis Boulevard (1938)

Marselis Boulevard 19-49
The 15 houses, designed by Alfred Mogensen, are constructed of yellow brick, with variously sized windows that enliven the façade. Attached houses were regarded as the ideal residential architectural form by the functionalists because they were cheaper to build than individual houses and offered both community and individuality for residents.

City Museum of Aarhus

Carl Blochs Gade 28
Exhibitions on the development of Aarhus.

Danish Poster Museum

Ludvig Feilbergsvej 7, Åbyhøj
In Åbyhøj, just west of Aarhus, with more than 180,000 Danish posters, many in the modernist style.

TOURS

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The organization **VisitAarhus** arranges guided tours focusing on architecture in Aarhus, including City Hall.
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Modern City Design, Social Building Art, Economic Technique and Industrial Art. The journal's contributing editors were young architects who championed functionalist architecture and had an enormous influence on the architecture and design criticism of the time. Led by the articles in *Critical Review*, the architects in Aarhus rebelled against the historically inspired architecture that they considered retrograde. They also believed that functionalism required "total design," with the architect designing not only the building, but also the entire interior, from the furniture to the lamps and door handles. Much of the original 1930s interiors of Aarhus's city hall and university survive.

The main stylistic difference between European and Danish functionalism is the Danes's use of brick. The international functionalists declared that brick was dead and replaced it with the newly developed cement. But Denmark had a long tradition of building with brick and this relatively inexpensive material remained attractive during the lean years of the 1930s. The need to imbue this material with a new function and point of view inspired the Danish architects to combine brick with the cubist design of modernism in a visionary way.

In 1931, the Aarhus City Council announced an architecture competition for the new university. Three architects, Kay Fisker, Poul Stegman and C. F. Møller, were chosen, although Møller went on to design much of the university on his own. The university had been founded in 1928 and the city council wanted buildings to suit Aarhus's new status as university city. The entire university, originally comprising six buildings (today, there are 195), was built of yellow brick, giving the ensemble a unique and homogenous expression; newer buildings added over the years were built of the same type of brick, in keeping with the original architectural idea. Although the yellow brick is a defining characteristic of the university, it was not, in fact, purposefully chosen; in the interest of economy, Møller gladly accepted a gift of one million bricks from the United Brick and Tile Factories of Jutland (Forenede Jydske Teglværker). The oak parquet, the tiles from the nearby village of Hasle, the pine wall paneling and other interior materials were similarly donated and warmly received by the architect, who was spurred to new heights of creativity through working with these chance, humble materials. The university is also notable for its low-pitched roofs without eaves that ensure the buildings' clean, straight lines.

The university was built in a hilly landscape in accordance with new ideas about the importance of light and open space, both within and without, and the various departmental buildings were dispersed in organic fashion across a valley. In 1931, the three winning architects went on a study trip to Berlin. Like so many others at the time, they were inspired by the new ideas they encountered there, and the way in which the university's buildings were adapted to the terrain was directly influenced by the Union School in Bernau, designed in 1930 by Hannes Meyer, the second director of the Bauhaus, who had managed to turn an uneven landscape into an advantage. But while modernism from Germany was the

Right, top and bottom Yellow brick, used to create a wide variety of patterns and textures, distinguishes the architecture of Aarhus University, one of two famous projects built of this material in Denmark. The other is the impressive Grundtvigs Church of 1940 in Copenhagen. The Library Tower, at top, is one of the oldest structures on the university campus.

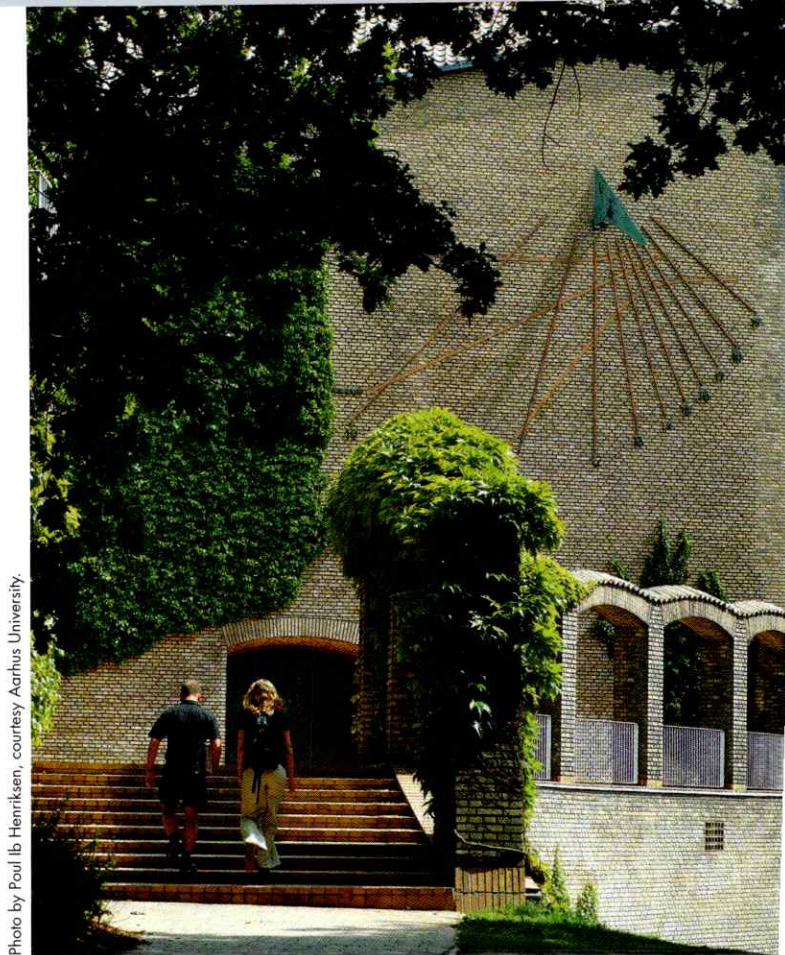


Photo by Poul Ib Henriksen, courtesy Aarhus University.



Photo by Poul Ib Henriksen, courtesy Aarhus University.

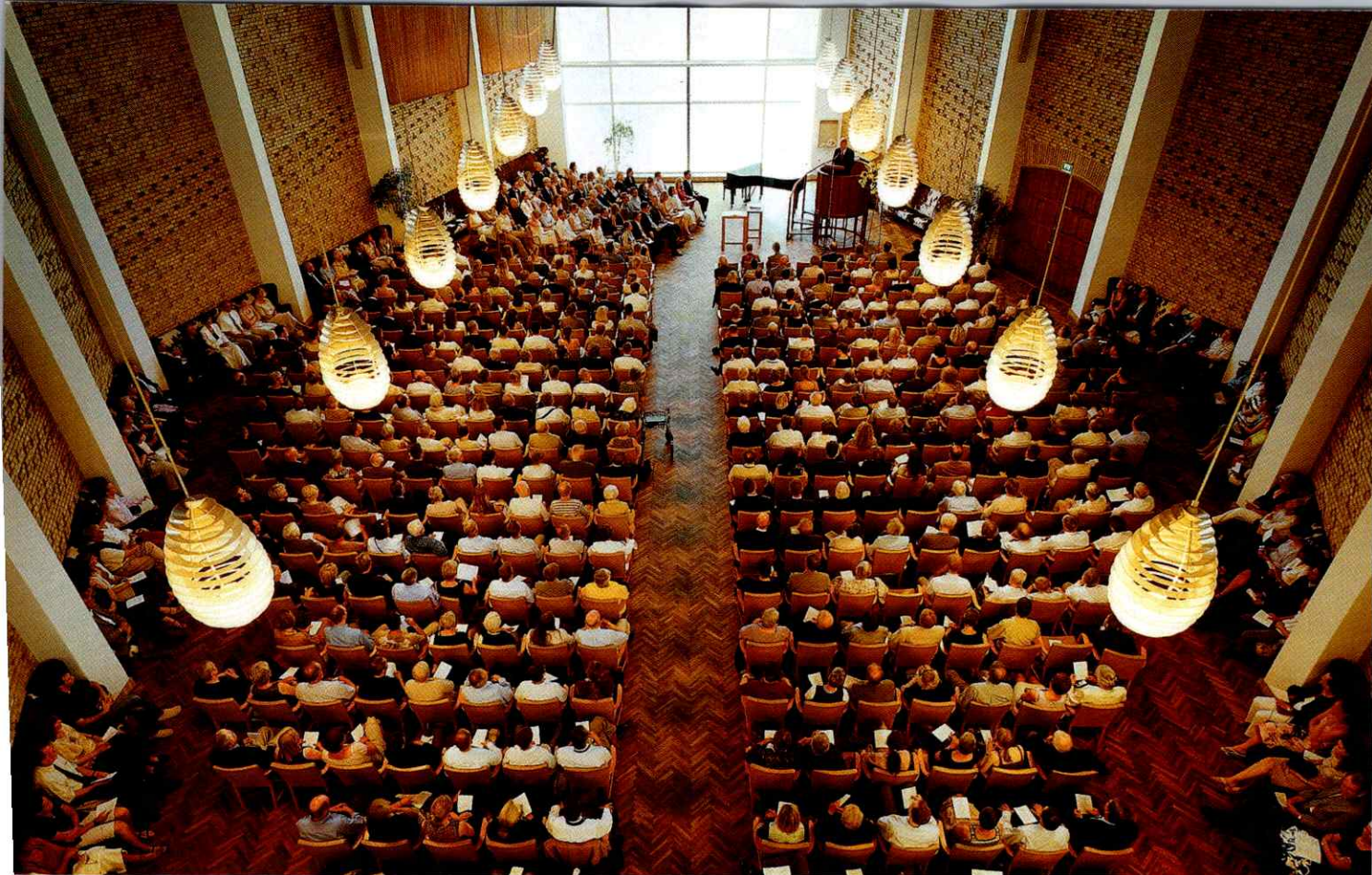


Photo by Poul Ib Henriksen, courtesy Aarhus University.

Above A dramatic view of the main lecture hall at Aarhus University with pendant lamps designed by Poul Henningsen.

Left The built-in settees in the main lecture hall are upholstered with cowhide; prominent patterns were created using simple materials, including the deeply textured brick walls and the herringbone pattern in the bog oak floor.

Opposite, top left The curving lines of the wooden bench contrast appealingly with the rectilinear brick surroundings.

Opposite, top right The sinuous passage, resembling an underground stream, leads students safely under the busy Nordre Ringvej road.

Opposite, bottom Even the circulation stairs were seized upon as an opportunity to create dynamic patterns with simple materials.

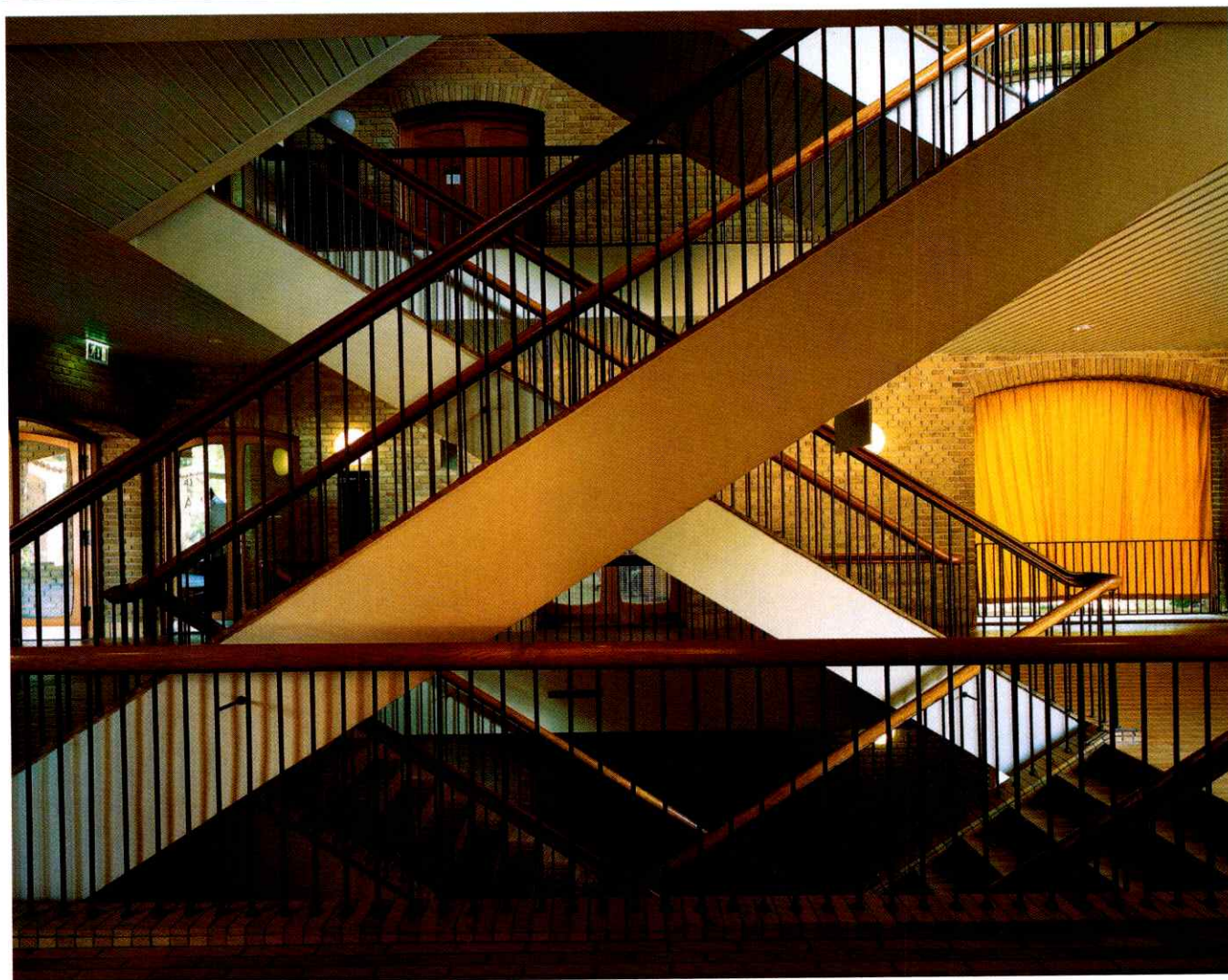
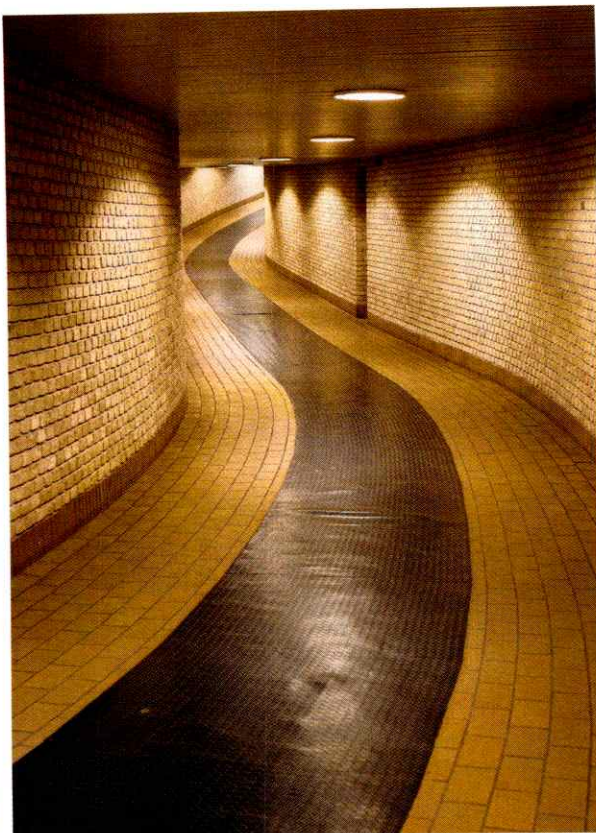
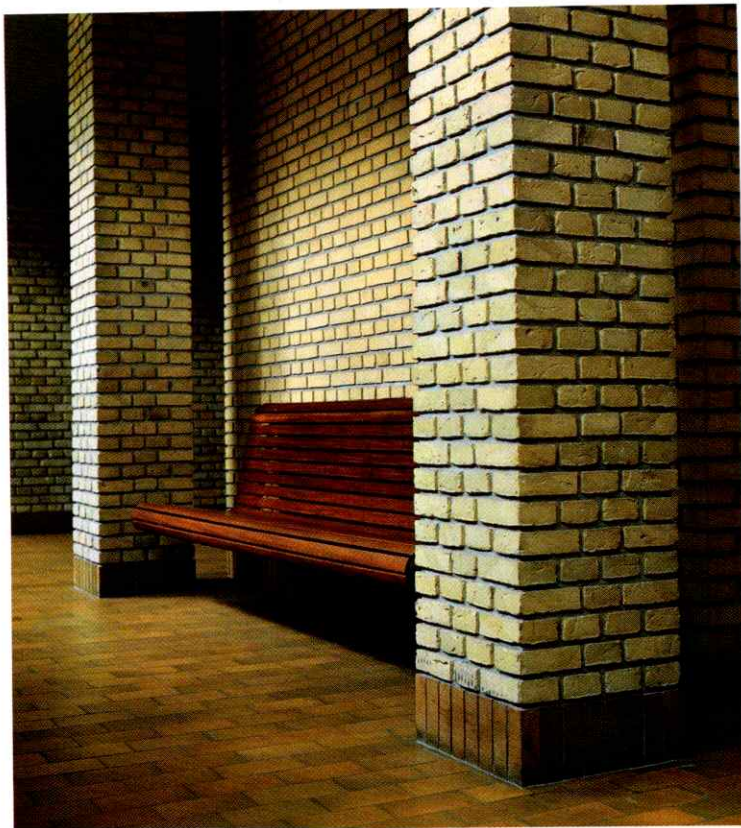
model for the design of Aarhus University, that neighboring country was soon to play a very different and negative role in the city's architecture.

The first part of the university was completed in 1933, while construction continued throughout the decade. When the Germans occupied Denmark in 1940, the Gestapo claimed the newly built main building as their headquarters. That led the British Royal Air Force to bomb that structure and two of the other largest buildings on campus in 1944. Møller was buried in the rubble during the attack, but was found alive. He went on to complete the final portion of the original design in 1946.

In 1937, Jacobsen, with the help of architect Erik Møller, won a competition to design the new city hall; theirs was the only design that originated in the new, edgy modernism. As



Photo by Poul Ib Henriksen, courtesy Aarhus University.





Above The typography in the metal signage uses a classic font from the inter-war period.

Top, left The Klintegaarden apartment building is situated high on a slope overlooking the sea.

Top, right During the German occupation of World War II, several resistance groups lived undercover at Klintegaarden, which has a number of communal facilities inspired by social housing in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.

the building — a true functionalist design with a yellow plastered façade — took form, however, its modern expression was criticized by a public uncomfortable with the new style; the people of Aarhus wanted a more monumental appearance for their city hall. By the time the building was inaugurated in 1942, the plastered façade had been upgraded to Norwegian Porsgrunn marble and above soared a 180-foot-high clock tower.

In spite of the changes, the architects did not compromise on the functionalist interior, which they designed with furniture designer Hans Wegner, who was already famous at the time. Inside, the modern structural system of reinforced concrete was left visible and painted white, according to the ideals of the time. Window sills were made of Oregon pine and teak and the walls and wall paneling faced with beechwood veneer. Since importing wood into treeless Denmark during the war was impossible, the floor of the central hall was made of bog-oak — trees buried and preserved for hundreds and even thousands of years in peat bogs — which was dug out of local swamps with great difficulty. Today, the interior remains intact and the wood has developed a beautiful patina.

While the use of brick marked the university as a classic Danish functionalist building, the city hall shows more similarity with European modernism. However, it

was not until the Fredericia-based architect Hans Ove Christensen moved to Aarhus that the city saw its first true European modernist buildings. Christensen's Klintegaarden apartment building is one of the finest examples of an international style functionalist building in Aarhus; with its white reinforced concrete, the building is strongly linked to Le Corbusier's approach. Klintegaarden, located on a slope near the Risskov neighborhood with a view to the sea, conjures the feeling of Mediterranean "white cities." From 1915, Christensen had owned a company that specialized in reinforced concrete construction, a technique he had studied with great interest on trips to Germany, France, Austria and Belgium; it was on these trips that he became familiar with, and a supporter of, the modernist ideals. As the building of Klintegaarden began, he kept to a strict declaration of modernism and had the building constructed with five-inch-thick outer walls of reinforced concrete with plastered façades and steel window frames. The use of such modern building materials was echoed in the interior design to reflect functionalist concepts of the ideal lifestyle.

The building complex consisted of 130 multi-room apartments and 30 one-room studios. A separate structure contained a common living room, dining room, kitchen, kindergarten and guest

rooms – facilities open to all residents intended to foster a sense of community. There was also a shared lawn with a fountain. In the early 1930s, the labor market changed dramatically and many women started working full time, fundamentally altering family life. This development was considered in the building's operations; in addition to the shared facilities, the building had a house assistant who helped families with housekeeping and laundry that many families no longer had time to do themselves. In every way, Klintegaarden was a modern apartment complex designed for modern life.

The German occupation of Denmark in April 1940 changed the real estate development business overnight. Money became scarce and the Germans took over most public building projects, leading many architects to leave the business or, like Hans Ove Christensen, to limit themselves to small residential projects. For these reasons, the functionalist movement in Denmark, and in Aarhus, was confined to the 1930s, leaving a unique, sharply defined and time-specific expression in the well-preserved city. ■

Majken Eliassen is a freelance journalist living in Copenhagen who writes about film, literature and architecture.

Below Klintegaarden's white façade, porthole windows, play of geometric elements and outdoor living spaces were inspired by Le Corbusier's modernist architecture and the "white cities" of the Mediterranean.

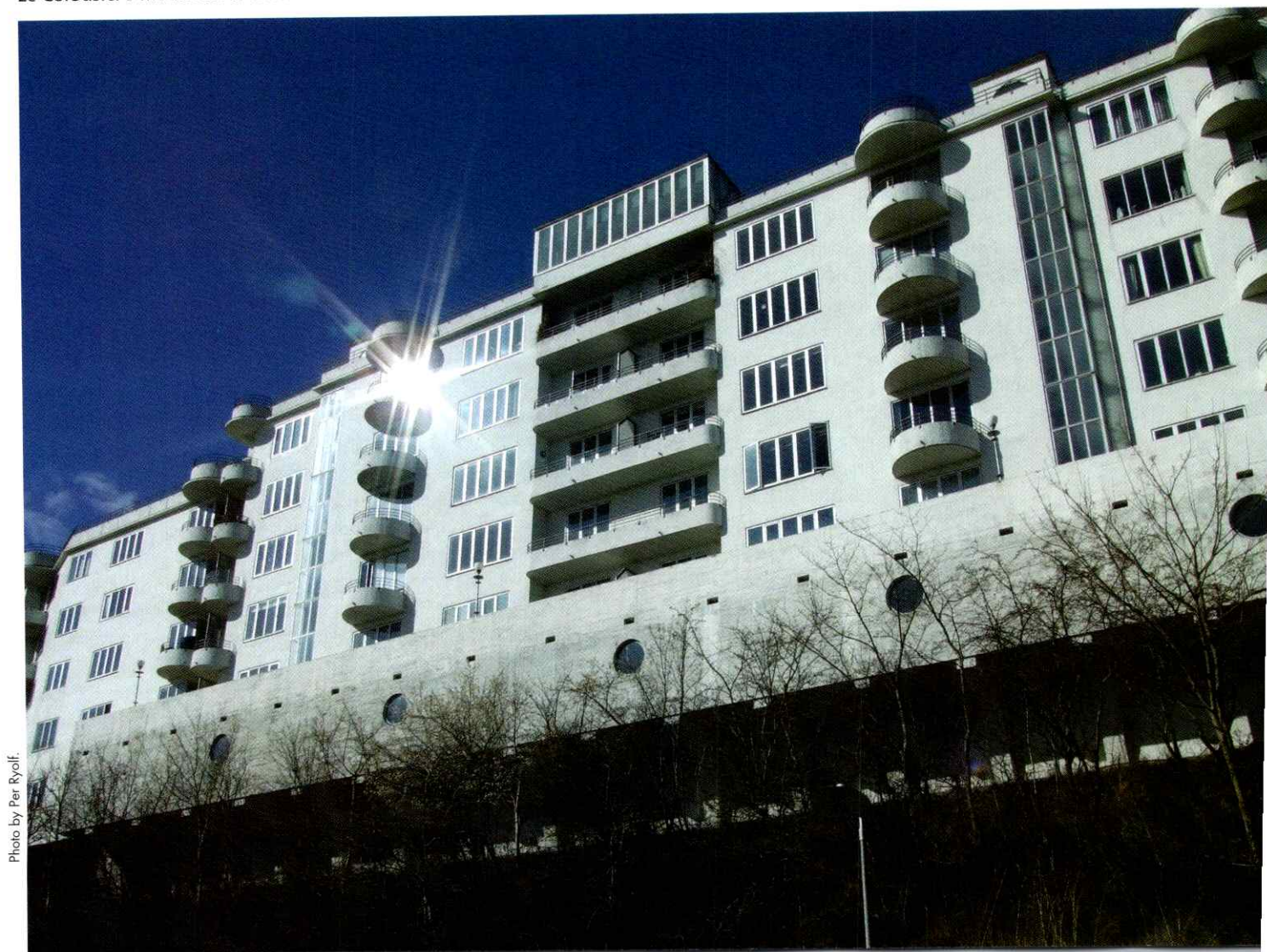
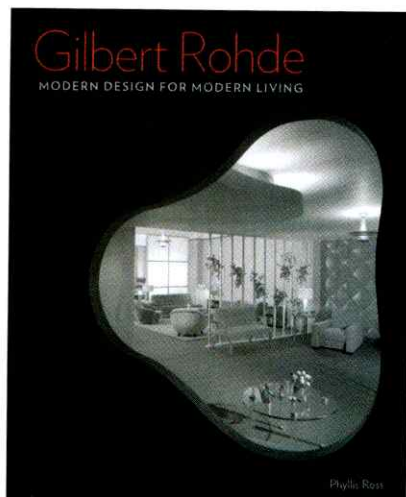


Photo by Per Ryolf.

GILBERT ROHDE, CLARICE CLIFF AND THAT MAN WRIGHT

By Sandy McLendon



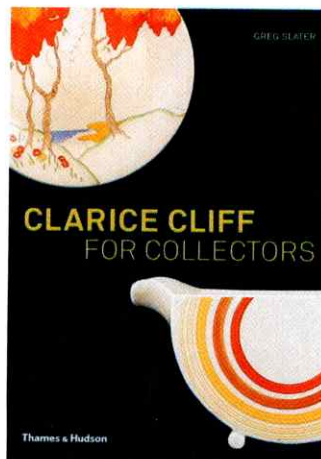
Gilbert Rohde (1894–1944) is often considered the man who made modernist furniture mainstream. Like many popular conceptions, it doesn't tell the whole story. What Rohde brought to modernism was Hollywood-level glamour. His tubular steel framing, curved profiles, inlays of contrasting woods and use of then-exotic materials like Plexiglas were the very last word in Moderne smartness. In *Gilbert Rohde: Modern Design for Modern Living* (Yale University Press,

hardcover, \$65, 304 pages, 190 illustrations in color and black-and-white), decorative arts historian Phyllis Ross traces Rohde's career and his influence on America's lifestyle; her book serves collectors and scholars equally well.

Rohde's relationship with manufacturer Herman Miller occupies the major portion of the book; Ross uses vintage advertising and catalogue shots plus new photography to give an understanding of how very fine this furniture was. One 1939 chest of drawers uses East Indian rosewood, burlled sequoia wood, brass and leatherette, with Plexiglas for its pulls; each drawer's pulls are spaced slightly farther apart than those of the drawer below, for an effect of casual elegance.

Rohde influenced other designers from his curvilinear take on Deco through his biomorphic designs of the '40s. At his death, he was still at work, designing cabinets for the television sets that were not yet a reality. Ross's book is a long-overdue look at an upscale, gleamingly new sensibility that America rightly esteemed.

"Bizarre" is not always a pejorative, as any admirer of Clarice Cliff's inimitable ceramics knows; the excitingly colored *Bizarre* range was one of young Britain's must-haves in the '20s and '30s. In *Clarice Cliff for Collectors* (Thames & Hudson, softcover, \$39.95, 240 pages, more than 500 illustrations in color) Cliff expert and über-collector Greg Slater shares his considerable knowledge with aficionados both novice and advanced. The volume is extremely well-organized and illustrated with clear, informative photographs, and the publisher has resisted what must



have been an enormous temptation to make this a coffee-table book. The volume, a trim 6.5 by 9.5 inches, easily slips into backpack or purse for shopping expeditions.

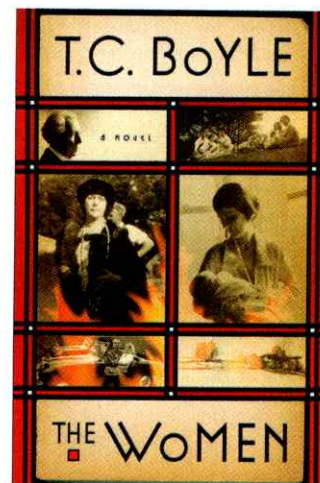
Slater has done an admirable job of telling the Clarice Cliff story, breaking things down into periods, basic shapes, patterns and exceptions-to-the-rule to make it fast and easy to identify something just discovered in an antiques shop or online auction. Genuinely rare items appear everywhere in the book's pages; even Cliff's breakfast sets — groupings of matched items intended for the breakfast-in-bed trays of grand houses — are included.

However, the best thing about the book is its photographs, which show Cliff's work with admirable clarity, highlighting her mastery of shape and color. The agreeable stridency of the Deco oranges and blues of a 1930s chubby *Melon* vase can hardly be believed as having come from the same designer as the very traditional, chintz-inspired *Lorna Doone* dinnerware. Cliff was not only capable of extremes, she seemingly reveled in them.

At its best, historical fiction can fill in the gaps between historic facts, giving the reader a sense of the human motivation behind events. In *The Women* (Viking, hardcover, \$27.95, 464 pages, not illustrated), T. Coraghessan Boyle, author of the 1993 novel *The Road to Wellville*, attempts to give us insight into the life of Frank Lloyd Wright. That unconventional, even pagan life has been fulsomely covered in several sensationalistic biographies, so at first glance, it would seem unnecessary to cover the same ground in fiction. But


Boyle seems to have found something Wright's biographers have missed. Where scholars see vast contradictions between Wright's professional and personal personas — how could such architectural genius co-exist with such a rascally private life? — Boyle sees a common thread. The story, set during the first four decades of the 20th century and told from the perspective of a fictional Japanese apprentice at Taliesin, centers around Wright's relationships with the women he loved: abandoned first wife Kitty Tobin; second wife, the flamboyant Miriam Noel; tragic mistress Mamah Borthwick Cheney; and Wright's third wife, the fierce, yet loving Olgyivanna Milanoff.

The historical record, which Boyle's tale respects for the most part, shows that Wright conceived his buildings in a sort of sweet madness, brushing aside qualms, traditions and realities to create as he saw fit. Boyle's evocative and credible fiction suggests that Wright ran his private life along exactly the same lines — that he was an organic whole in spite of apparent contradictions. ■





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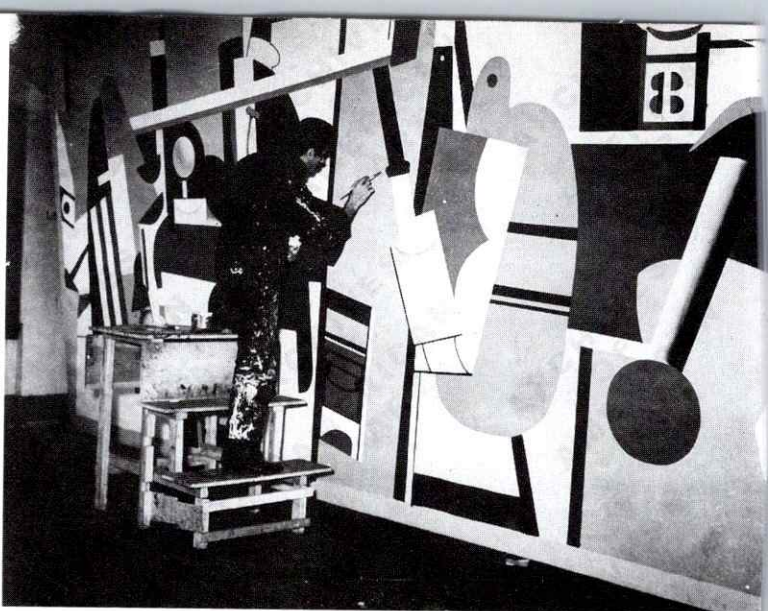
Once Upon a Hardscrabble Time

By Sandy McLendon

They say times are hard, but there was a time when they were even tougher. During the Great Depression, much of America's wealth vanished into thin air, leaving millions jobless, homeless and flat broke.

It was a desperate time that called for – and got – desperate measures, in the form of an alphabet soup of new federal relief agencies like the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). While these Roosevelt-era New Deal agencies were created to give out-of-work Americans the dignity of paying jobs, some of them also became famous for putting handsome architecture and public art, created by these workers, into hundreds of American towns and cities. Post offices, hospitals and federal courthouses were three favored projects, often built in a style mixing classicism with more modernist elements – sometimes referred to as “Greco-Deco” – heavy on

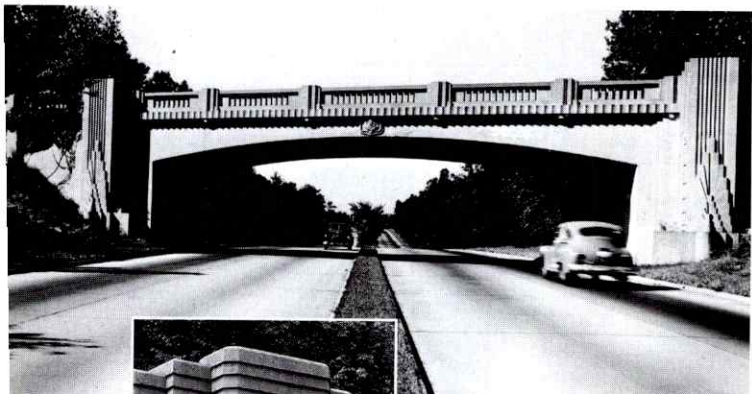
Courtesy of the Federal Art Project, Photographic Division collection, 1935-1942, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.



Above Arshile Gorky working on his mural *Aviation* in LaGuardia Airport for the Federal Art Project, 1937.

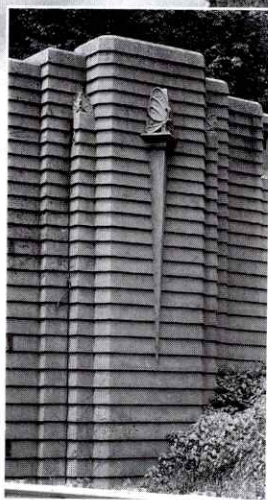
Left View from median of the Merritt Parkway to East Rocks Road Bridge, photograph c. 1940.

Inset Bridge carrying Merritt Parkway at Black Rock Turnpike, Fairfield, CT. Detail of decorative pilaster on abutment; photo post 1968.



Collection Connecticut Department of Transportation, Historic American Engineering Record (Library of Congress).

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Streamline Moderne influences and bas-relief.

Parks and scenic highways, including the Blue Ridge Parkway that runs through the Appalachian Mountains in Virginia and North Carolina and the Merritt Parkway in Connecticut, were built in part by federally-paid laborers, some of whom worked for as little as a dollar a day and were grateful for it. The Merritt, a 37-mile route running from Greenwich to Stratford,

was cut through farmland in a way that left the area's scenic beauty intact for the enjoyment of motorists. And although most federally-funded bridge projects in this era were strictly utilitarian, each of the Merritt Parkway's 69 cast concrete bridges, designed by architect George L. Dunkelberger, was unique; the Art Deco, Moderne, rustic and neoclassical designs form a distinguished

architectural ensemble. The highway, still in use today, is remarkable for its state of preservation in the face of necessary modernization.

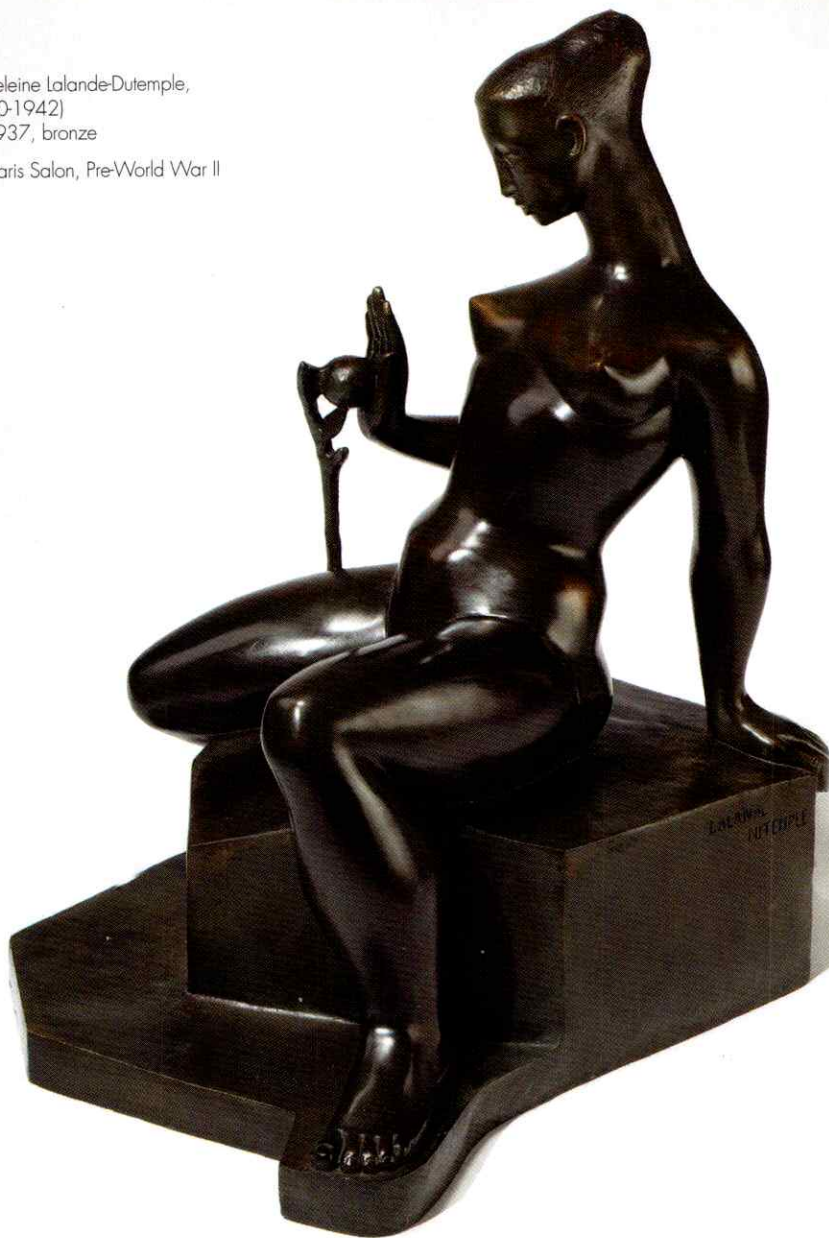
New Deal funding created more than useful infrastructure. Arts projects offered emotional enrichment to Americans disheartened by the length and breadth of the downturn and the WPA's Federal Art Project (FAP) was established to reach even the most rural hamlet. Dance and drama programs brought delight to many, but it was the mural programs of the FAP; the Fine Arts section of the Federal Works Agency (FWA); and the U.S. Treasury Section of Painting and Sculpture that left the most lasting legacy, putting art in many federal buildings, especially post offices, across the country.

An astonishing number of notable artists created murals for public buildings under these programs, including Arshile Gorky, Stuart Davis, Henry Varnum Poor, Raphael and Moses Soyer and Adolph Gottlieb. Many are in the popular Social Realist style of the time – there was some pressure to produce optimistic, laudatory works for towns concerned about their image – but some, like Gorky's 1937 *Aviation* at LaGuardia Airport for the Federal Art Project, 1937, embrace abstraction.

Time has not been kind to all of the New Deal's federally-funded architecture and art, but an amazing amount remains across the country, much of it in the smaller communities that benefited most from these programs. There are U.S. Postal Service and other federal programs in place to conserve the legacy, which is now coming to the attention of more scholars and the public.

Today, faced with a similarly bleak economic landscape, a new president and Congress have put together a stimulus package, some of which is intended for job creation, and some for infrastructure improvements; the Merritt Parkway bridges are to receive stimulus funds for repairs, as they received such funds for their creation. It is not yet known if these jobs programs will benefit the arts to the same extent as during the Depression, but if they do, America has a new legacy coming. What it will be is anyone's guess.

Cecile Madeleine Lalonde-Dutemple,
French (1910-1942)
Eve, circa 1937, bronze
Exhibited: Paris Salon, Pre-World War II



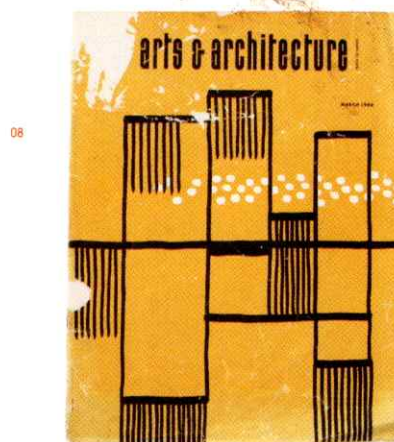
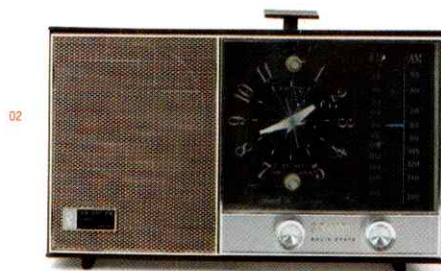
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